



Burial site earmarked for approval despite opposition

CEMETERY SET TO BE GIVEN NOD

Report by Dayna Farrington

A HUGE new cemetery was this week expected to be given the go-ahead in spite of public opposition to the plans.

The new burial space would be created on a site popular with dog walkers opposite the existing Powke Lane Crematorium in Rowley Regis.

It was recommended for approval ahead of a meeting yesterday (Wednesday) – despite an 800-name petition against it.

The 3.9-acre site, next to Powke Lane Industrial Estate, is the size of nearly four football pitches.

The land has been identified to provide burial space and is just a short distance from the Powke Lane crematorium, which recently had a £1.3 million revamp.

Anger

A new car park would also be created to serve the cemetery. However the land, which is currently open green space, is popular with dog walkers and the plans have sparked anger.

The council had received 23 letters of objection and two petitions containing more than 800 signatures – stating the area is a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC), concerns about highways safety, a lack of public consultation, opening hours, and that the site would become an area for youths to congregate.

Russell Bibb, who lives on Powke Lane, said: “The area they are proposing to develop has been a nature reserve for many years. I feel that we will lose this urban oasis of wildlife. Not only is it also used by many families with young children and I just feel that there are better sites to explore.”

But Rowley Regis Councillor Chris Tranter said: “We need the room to bury people, it is as simple as that.”

Plea after men stabbed

POLICE are investigating after two men were stabbed in Rowley Regis at the weekend.

Police were called to High Street, where the men had been attacked. They were taken to hospital shortly after the incident at 1.30am on Sunday. Officers are looking at CCTV and anyone with information is urged to call 101.

BIG POLITICAL GUNS DESCEND ON THE REGION



Theresa May arrives at the Tory conference



Boris Johnson makes his speech



Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn with prospective candidate Ian Cooper in Halesowen

LABOUR leader Jeremy Corbyn rallied support in Birmingham this week for their annual conference. Prime Minister Theresa May gave her keynote speech at the ICC yesterday (Wednesday), which followed a fringe meeting speech on Tuesday from her possible leadership rival Boris Johnson. He urged the PM to ‘chuck Chequers’ and aim for a hard Brexit in her negotiations with the European Union.

Meanwhile, the Conservative party gathered in Birmingham this week for their annual conference. Prime Minister Theresa May gave her keynote speech at the ICC yesterday (Wednesday), which followed a fringe meeting speech on Tuesday from her possible leadership rival Boris Johnson. He urged the PM to ‘chuck Chequers’ and aim for a hard Brexit in her negotiations with the European Union.

Hundreds gathered in Halesowen town centre to hear Mr Corbyn’s speech. The crowd chanted ‘we love you Jeremy’ and ‘Jeremy for Prime Minister’. Mr Corbyn pledged support for Ian Cooper, the party’s parliamentary candidate for Halesowen and Rowley Regis. Labour is targeting the seat, held by Conservative MP James Morris with a 5,253 majority.

Mr Corbyn said: “You are going to see me many, many more times in the West Midlands. I love it.” He added: “I want the legacy of the next Labour government to be something very special. I want a National Education Service that provides education from cradle to grave.”

‘Selfish’ father gets life sentence for daughter’s murder

A ‘SELFISH’ father who stabbed his defenceless daughter to death will spend at least 27 years behind bars for the ‘brutal and cowardly’ murder.

William Billingham shook his head and stared at the floor as he was jailed for life after plunging a 20cm kitchen knife into young Mylee Billingham’s chest.

The murderer, who will be 82 before he can be considered for release, killed the eight-year-old in his Valley View home in Brownhills in a ‘revenge’ act against ex-partner Tracey Taundry.

Mylee’s mother Ms Taundry, aged 34, who has another two children with Billingham, paid tribute to her beautiful daughter. She said Billingham’s ‘most selfish and despicable actions’ had left her heartbroken.

In a statement read to Birmingham Crown Court, she said: “How can I ever explain how the murder of my beautiful daughter, has affected me, her sisters and my immediate family. Mylee was brutally taken from us by a man who was supposed to care for and protect her.”

Jurors unanimously convicted Billingham, who took a puff of his inhaler after hearing the impact of his callous offending. The 55-year-old, who had previous convictions for theft and assault occasioning actual bodily harm, and two cautions for common assault, slashed his wrists with razor blades while in custody.

POLITICS

MEP quits UKIP over ‘extreme’ views

WEST Midlands MEP Bill Etheridge has quit UKIP, insisting he can no longer serve under the leadership of Gerard Batten.

The former Dudley councillor decided to end to his seven years with the party, citing ‘despair’ at the direction of the leadership, saying he could not represent ‘extreme nationalist and reactionary views’.

INSIDE RED HOT BLUES BAND FINALE



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Back to the 80s at hospice fundraiser



A colourful team at the Neon Run

SUPPORTERS of Mary Stevens Hospice raced back to the 1980s for the Neon Run at Himley Hall on Friday that raise around £7,000 for the charity.

A Flock of 80s tribute band, playing hits from the New Romantic decade, entertained the crowd of fluorescent clad runners alongside fire-breathers, a bhangra band and DJ playing 80s hit.

Charlotte Schofield, Head of Fundraising and Lottery at Mary Stevens Hospice said: "We'd just like to take a moment to thank everyone who

joined us back in 1985 for our fabulous Neon Night Run!

"Everyone from the performers to the supporters made such an incredible effort and to see a sea of people just enjoying themselves and the company of their community is a memory I'll enjoy for the rest of my life.

Brilliant

"The fact that coming and having a brilliant night with us has made care possible for a family in need is just the most overwhelming feeling and

we're so grateful for the support we receive time and time again."

Among the attractions was an American DeLorean sports car, same as the iconic vehicle used in classic 1980s movie Back To The Future.

It marked the third year the fundraising event has been held, although the date this year had to be switched so it did not clash with another event in the grounds of Himley Hall.

The Hagley Road hospice, in Oldswinford, cares for people with life-limiting illness and helps their families.

Pregnant robber in attack on taxi driver

A PREGNANT woman and her partner in crime robbed a taxi driver after quibbling over a £20 fare in Dudley.

Marie Pritchard and Michael Ward snatched their taxi fare back from the driver before stealing his keys and mobile phone during the robbery.

The pair, both aged 31, robbed the cab on April 6 last year whilst on bail for a string of offences. They had been picked up in Coseley's Castle Street before disagreeing about paying with a £20 or two £10 notes at about 1.45am. In St James's Road Ward opened the passenger door and tried to grab the fare from the driver. He struck the driver on the head, stole the fare and the victim's phone. Pritchard grabbed keys from the ignition.

It came after an incident which saw the pair visiting the Tivdale home of the parents of a man Ward had 'problems' with. Ward kicked the front door and Pritchard pushed her way into the house during the early hours of January 15 last year.

Drunk Pritchard brandished a wine bottle and an 'agitated' Ward held a blade, saying: "I'm going to stab him."

More than £7,000 of damage was caused outside the property as Ward smashed a car windscreen, damaged a wing mirror and tyre. Armed with a metal bar, he then drove to the home of his mother's friend, smashing her windscreen, house windows and front door.

Defence barrister Mr Sunit Sandhu said Ward wanted to apologise, adding: "This was a drunken haze." Ms Samantha Forsythe, defending Pritchard, said she has realised she 'has to change'. She gave birth to her and Ward's son while in custody.

Ward, of Tower Street, Dudley, was jailed for 52 months while Pritchard, of no fixed abode, was jailed for 48 months. Both admitted robbery and affray. Ward also admitted making a threat to kill, possession of a bladed article and criminal damage. Pritchard admitted being in breach of previous court orders.

Hundreds at first Duncan Edwards day



Family members Sidney Edwards, Roger Brownhill, Lawrence Brownhill, Keith Edwards and Dusky Edwards

THE First Duncan Edwards Day saw hundreds of people attend a ceremony beside his statue in Dudley town centre on Monday.

It was held on what would have been the football legend's 82nd birthday.

Relatives of the Manchester United and England footballer - who died aged 21 from injuries

sustained in the Munich air disaster in 1958 - were among those attending.

Mayor of Dudley Councillor Alan Taylor joined members of the Edwards family as they laid a wreath in remembrance at the foot of Duncan's statue. Organisers estimated at least 300 people attended.

Dusky Edwards, 49, Duncan's

second cousin and a trustee of the Duncan Edwards Foundation, said: "It really warms me, how this young man touched so many lives. Duncan would have loved what we are doing with the community."

Football freestyler Ewan Baggot performed and a choir from Duncan's old school Priory Primary sang.

Passengers shocked by violence at bus station

A WOMAN was grabbed by the neck and assaulted in an attack at Stourbridge bus station.

The attack took place at the bus station on Vauxhall Road as commuters and shoppers made their way home at around 5pm on Friday.

But the woman and her attacker are both said to have left the area before police officers arrived at the scene.

One passenger took to social media following the incident to say what she had seen had left her shaken.

The witness said: "Security needed on Stourbridge bus station ASAP. Woman being attacked by a man. He's putting his hands round her neck and mouthing off at everyone.

"He came over and put his hand round her neck and pushed her back towards the window. Then walked off and was having a go at someone else. Then came back to have a go at her again and threatened to beat her up."

Officers are now appealing for anyone with information to get in touch.

A spokesman added that they believe they have now identified the woman but enquiries are on-going.

Anyone with information can call West Midlands Police on 101, or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

Two arrests after dawn police raids

DAWN raids in the Black Country have seen to two men being arrested as part of an operation following more than a dozen break-ins at factories, businesses and charity stores.

Thieves had targeted 14 commercial properties in Dudley and Staffordshire this summer - costing businesses £250,000 in damages and stolen property.

But a joint operation last week by Staffordshire and West Midlands Police saw two men, aged 27 and 29, were arrested on suspicion of burglary in Bilston and Low Hill, Wolverhampton.

Addresses in Willenhall, Heath Town, Fallings Park, Pennfields and Eastfield were also raided by police. This follows 14 commercial property burglaries including in Kingswinford.

School car park call

FED-UP parents have demanded a new car park after complaining they have nowhere to pick up pupils near a Tipton school. More than 200 people have requested council bosses introduce a new car park on land near Joseph Turner Primary School, on Powis Avenue.

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Tip may stay and could be made bigger

DUDLEY borough's main tip in Stourbridge could be made bigger, according to the council's new environment boss.

Environment boss Khurshid Ahmed, part of the council's new Labour administration, said he would not only consider keeping the existing waste site in Birmingham Street open but he could see it expanded.

Both Labour and Conservative-controlled councils have faced a headache about how to solve the borough's need for a bigger tip.

Labour's plan to move to the Leys Depot in Brierley Hill was rejected by the Tories when they took control of the council last year, after they insisted it would create traffic chaos.

Then Tory councillor Karen Shakespeare said that leaders were considering alternative sites. Now Councillor Ahmed says 'all options' are back on the table but suggested the council could now favour an expansion of the existing site.

"There are a few options available at the moment," he explained. "We need to explore what is already on the cards as well as expanding at Stourbridge. We are looking at the financial issues. We also want to make it easily accessible, so we need to look at the impact that would have. It needs to be considered carefully."

The tip and recycling centre is set to close later this month for essential maintenance work. It will be shut on Thursday, October 25, for work repairing surfaces and replacing bollards. It is expected to be open again the following day, with residents urged to use facilities at Anchor Lane, Wolverhampton, during the closure.

Paramedics are attacked at work

TWO out of every five paramedics in the Midlands have been attacked in the last year, according to a shocking new figures

Staff at West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) posted the highest figure of any trust in the country when asked if they had experienced physical violence from patients or other members of the public in the last 12 months while carrying out their vital job.

An NHS review of ambulance trusts by Lord Carter of Coles said the actual percentage could be far higher, as assaults against staff are no longer recorded nationally. The service said there had been 171 attacks since April. There were 410 in total in 2017/18. The review, which praised WMAS for its efficiency, said 40 per cent of its staff had come under attack.

Council leader calling for a 'fair deal'



Councillor Pete Lowe –

RETURNING council leader Pete Lowe has vowed to fight tooth and nail to stop cuts in Government funding that he fears will have denied Dudley borough £100 million by 2020.

The Labour councillor has also promised to review controversial proposals from the previous Conservative administration for a travellers' transit site in Budden Road, Coseley.

Councillor Lowe said he would make the battle against austerity his key priority after returning to the top job after Labour seized control of the authority by the slenderest margin.

The Conservatives were ousted by just one vote as former Conservative councillor Heather Rogers shifted allegiance to Labour during a crunch council meeting last Wednesday.

She criticised the Tory leadership saying a culture of 'bullying, victimisation and harassment' had been allowed. But Tory group leader Councillor Patrick Harley has dismissed calls for his resignation and has vowed to fight on, dubbing the claims by Councillor Rogers as 'vexatious'.

Councillor Lowe revealed that he would be writing to the Government to request a 'fair deal' for Dudley when the local gov-

ernment funding settlement is announced.

With the council's political power balance still on a knife edge, he called on Tory councillors to support Labour colleagues for 'the greater good' as local authority funding had reached crisis point with some councils running out of money.

He said: "We will need to work as all 72 councillors together. The financial issues of this borough will not change because of a change of leader. We have been cut by £76m since 2010 and it will be £100m by 2020. We are calling for a proper review of local authority funding that addresses the needs of the community."

Hundreds join march to match for Ryan

HUNDREDS marched and attended a memorial football match in Stourbridge for footballer Ryan Passey, who was fatally stabbed in the town last year.

Ryan's family and friends were joined by hundreds of supporters as they marched through the town centre towards Stourbridge FC's War Memorial ground on High Street, Amblecote. Ryan had played for the Glassboys.

They were raising awareness about knife crime and calling for a change in the law to give families the opportunity to appeal jury decisions. Kobe Murray was acquitted of murder and manslaughter, following 24-year-old Ryan's stabbing at Chicago's night club.

Speeches made by deputy leader of Dudley Council, Councillor Judy Foster, assistant police and crime commissioner Ashley Bertie and Mayor Councillor Alan Taylor.

Stourbridge MP Margot James, who supports the family campaign, attended the community event and match between Wolves All-stars and a Justice for Ryan team.

Emotional

His mother Gillian Taylor said: "It's overwhelming the amount of people that have turned up, it's so emotional and I'm so glad for all the support we've had.

"Ryan was such a popular happy-go-lucky chap and was loved by everyone, it just shows with the amount of people that have turned out for him. It's just amazing.

"We want to change the law, that's our main aim. It's also to raise awareness of knife crime and get into the heads of younger people that it's not right to carry a knife or stab someone. We'll keep on fighting, the justice system is failing us."

The family were also joined by the families of stabbing victims Reagan Asbury and James Brindley.

Aiden Passey, Ryan's father, said: "We want justice. It's terrible what is going on with knife crime across the country. The public has been great and they've turned up again in their hundreds to support us."



Ryan's friends and family pay tribute before the match at Stoubridge FC's War Memorial ground



Ryan Passey was stabbed to death in Stourbridge



The march through Stourbridge, led by his family

NEWS IN BRIEF

Praise for town's blooming success

THE Mayor of Dudley has congratulated volunteers and community groups involved in the Halesowen in Bloom campaign.

Made up of over 100 volunteers, the group has taken a gold award in the urban community category award for the Heart of England. It will now go up against four other towns from across the country in the national awards on October 19.

Mayor Councillor Alan Taylor said: "I am delighted and not at all surprised to hear that Halesowen in Bloom has made it to the national final, it is a beautiful town and a joy to see it in bloom."

Valley's bat theme on Halloween trail

FAMILIES can head to RSPB Sandwell Valley for Halloween fun.

The nature reserve is hosting a bat-themed trail from October 27 to November 4.

Visitors will be led around the site to find answers to a ghoulish quiz with a prize for everyone that solves the clues.

During the trail there will be plenty of thrills and surprises to keep everyone entertained.

The trail takes place between 11am to 3pm, with prices at £3 per child, or £2.40 per RSPB child member.

Ex-mayor's Everest trek challenge

A FORMER Mayor of Dudley is planning his greatest challenge in aid of Mary Stevens Hospice.

Councillor Steve Waltho is heading to the Himalayas to hike to Everest Base Camp next week to raise funds and awareness for the Stoubridge hospice which serves the Black Country.

The 63-year-old, who was mayor in 2015/16, is hoping to raise £1,000 for the Hagley Road hospice by climbing 17,600 feet, which is more than half way up the world's tallest mountain.

Visit www.givepenny.com/ever-est-climb-2018 to make a donation.

Focus on NHS debt to Windrush generation

A SERIES of photographs will be on display at Sandwell Hospital during October to mark Black History Month.

The exhibition has been put together to celebrate the Windrush generation of nurses and other medical staff who have helped shape the NHS. They feature in the Here To Stay exhibition a the hospital's Education centre in West Bromwich, taken by photographer Inés Elsa Dalal.



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4 'Chop shops' found in car crime raids

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, October 4, 2018

POLICE uncovered two 'chop shops' - where stolen vehicles are stripped down into parts for sale - and arrested seven men as part of a clampdown on car crime.

The arrests came after five vehicles were stolen from a Bilston yard and a road in Birmingham last month.

The 'chop shops' at Minerva Lane in Wolverhampton and at Oak Lane in Kingswinford, were discovered within an hour of each other last Wednesday.

West Midlands Police traced a BMW X5 stolen from the Bilston site to the Wolverhampton 'chop shop'. A 21-year-old man was arrested. Two other men, aged 32 and 19, were detained at a garage containing car parts.

Earlier that day, police officers on patrol in Bilston arrested two men, aged 22 and 31, on suspicion of car theft. The men were found asleep in the back of a van, which was displaying false number plates.

Further inquiries led officers to seize a BMW 1-Series parked nearby, which police believe was also stolen from Bilston.

Campaign

Later, police discovered the second 'chop shop' in Kingswinford. The site, in an industrial unit off Oak Lane, was discovered after a BMW M3, which was stolen from Quinton Road West in Birmingham, led officers to that location.

The vehicle had been stripped down and two men, aged 46 and 36 from Pensnett and Brierley Hill, were arrested on suspicion of handling stolen goods. Both men have been released under investigation. Meanwhile, efforts are on-going to try and trace a man who is believed to have delivered the car to the Kingswinford site.

The operations come after the force launched a campaign last month urging the public to be vigilant over 'chop shops'.

Van driver mowed down cyclist who had punched him

The sun never sets at Merry Hill

SUMMER may have come to an end but the sun is still shining INSIDE the Merry Hill shopping centre.

A giant 50-foot artificial sun was installed at the centre last week and now the glowing orange sphere has gone on tour to intu's other shopping centres across the country.

The artificial sun has a 15-metre circumference and shines as brightly as 12,000 lightbulbs.

The installation follows intu's happiness survey, which revealed four in five people in the West Midlands feel happier when it's sunny.

Rob Pickersgill, marketing manager at intu Merry Hill, said: "After a glorious summer we wanted to extend the sunshine and create something sunny for our shoppers."

The sun was modelled on a photograph captured by NASA and will be going on a tour of 11 intu centres until October 8.

According to the intu happiness survey, nearly a third of people in the West Midlands (31 per cent) say 2018 has been their happiest summer in memory despite the economic uncertainty, and two in five (41 per cent) credit the sunshine for their increased happiness.

The research also revealed that more than two-thirds of people (69 per cent) feel happier in the summer than winter with sunshine (27 per cent), longer days (24 per cent), summer holidays (16 per cent) and more outdoor activity (15 per cent) the top reasons.



The huge artificial sun shining inside intu Merry Hill shopping centre

A VAN driver from Netherton who deliberately mowed down a cyclist in Dudley in a revenge attack during a road rage clash is facing a long prison sentence.

Kalvinder Bhamra, aged 65, swerved his vehicle into 25-year-old John Carter after being twice punched to the ground by the bike rider moments earlier.

Trouble flared when Bhamra blocked part of the street while trying to turn his van right onto Halesowen Road from Baptist End Road in Netherton on August 1 last year. The stationary van was in the way of Mr Carter, who was cycling to work and stopped to shout abuse at the 65-year-old electrician.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard that the cyclist admitted punching and kicking Bhamra after he got out of the vehicle, saying he felt threatened and that the driver has grabbed his bike and would not give it back.

A motorcyclist stopped, got between the pair and told them to grow up.

Headphones

Mr Carter said: "After the motorcyclist left I went back to get my bike, put my headphones on and started riding. The next thing I knew I was crawling across the road onto the grass. I had no idea what had happened because I was hit from behind."

Bhamra told the court: "It was not my intention to cause him any harm. I was hoping to call the police and sort it out. My intention was to park behind him. I misjudged the distance between me and the bike."

Bhamra, from Chichester Avenue, denied causing grievous bodily harm but was found guilty by the jury who delivered a majority verdict of 11-1. He was remanded to be sentenced at a later date.

Drones being deployed to track bikers

POLICE are using drones to catch louts riding illegally riding motorbikes on off-road locations in the Upper Gornal area.

Officers hope to track down the culprits who have been upsetting residents and blighting green areas.

The operation is part of a campaign led by police and councillors to crack down on nuisance bikers, and comes after residents raised the issue with Upper Gornal and Woodseton councillors Kieran Casey and Adam Aston.

Now that police say the drones will be deployed, Councillor Casey hopes this will tackle problem. Police will also step up patrols in the area and posters have been placed along the streets urging the public to contact police if they spot motorbikes being ridden illegally.

Councillor Casey said residents raised concerns, particularly around High Arcal Park.



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Next year's 100-mile route Velo cycle race heads east

THE controversial 100-mile cycling event, Vélo, has had its route changed – so it will steer clear of Staffordshire and almost all of the Black Country when it takes place next year.

Vélo Birmingham Midlands will take cyclists east of Birmingham for the majority of the event on May 12. It will only briefly enter the boundaries of Sandwell and Dudley when the route turns east at Halesowen and down Hagley Road West to the finishing line in the city.

Last year the race, which was called Vélo Birmingham, divided opinion after it brought many villages in South Staffordshire and Dudley to a standstill.

The organisers were blamed for failing to consult over the route. Some businesses were forced to shut and saboteurs left nails and tacks along the route. Lord Sebastian Coe and England World Cup winning captain Martin Johnson attended the launch event in Birmingham.

It is expected that 17,000 riders will take part next year. Last year there were around 15,000.

Support

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, said 2017's event was an 'absolute triumph'. He said: "As we get ready to host the 2022 Commonwealth Games, the Velo Birmingham and Midlands will be a great event to showcase the best of the region."

"This was an absolute triumph last year, with 15,000 people riding their bikes on the closed road route and many residents coming out to support them. There was also a very positive impact on the local economy, and of course the thousands of pounds raised for different charities."

Despite the route only touching the boundaries of Sandwell and Dudley,

Report by Alex Ross

both councils have had involvement in its preparations.

Councillor David Hosell, Sandwell Council's cabinet member for highways and environment, said: "It's fantastic for Sandwell to be part of this major cycling event for the region and we'll be sure to give riders a big cheer as they cycle past our newly-restored Lightwoods House and Park on the way to the finish line."

"We will be working closely with the team at Vélo Birmingham Midlands for a successful event that also keeps disruption on our roads to a minimum."

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services at Dudley Council, said: "We pride ourselves on having some fantastic facilities in this borough for people to enjoy a healthy lifestyle and experience the great outdoors."

"The newly named Vélo Birmingham Midlands is a great opportunity for communities to come together."

People can sign up for the event from October 4, however, there is expected to be fierce competition with 40,000 riders already registering interest.

For more information, visit www.velo.birmingham.co.uk



The extensive route of the Velo for next year, which will only touch on the Sandwell and Dudley borough borders

More firms suffer due to Carillion going bust

THE number of construction firms going insolvent increased by a fifth following the collapse of Wolverhampton-based Carillion earlier this year, a new study shows.

A total of 780 companies in the industry fell into insolvency in the first quarter of 2018, a 20 per cent rise on the same period a year ago, said accountants Moore Stephens.

There were 2,764 insolvencies among building firms in the 2017/18 financial year, up by six per cent on the previous 12 months.

Carillion was involved in major projects across the UK and abroad, including military bases, hospitals, road and rail projects. Following its liquidation, thousands of sub-contractors lost significant amounts of work and were left with a substantial bad debt, said Moore Stephens.

A trade union has been told that redundancy payments to workers who lost their jobs after the collapse of Carillion will cost the taxpayer £65 million.

The Unite union said that figure only covered Carillion staff, not those working for suppliers.

The firm went into liquidation in January with debts reported at around £6.9 billion.

A Freedom of Information request by Unite to the Insolvency Service showed £50m had been paid out with the total set to reach £65m. Most of the 19,000 staff were made redundant, so could make a claim from the Redundancy Payments Office, said Unite.

Meanwhile, Sandwell's NHS Trust hopes to have a contractor in place by November to start work on completion of the Midland Metropolitan Hospital in Smethwick. Work on the £475m hospital halted when Carillion went bust.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews



There's no art at all in paying out for this

A MEDIUM-sized, white wall unit, with six shelves. Adorned with about 35, small, plain white vases, and a few matching plates.

It's quite stylish, but unremarkable. The sort of thing you might see in the Wilko catalogue. So what would you pay for it? £200? Ok, push the boat out. At a pinch you might shell out £400, if you've got a trendy loft apartment. And you don't have to assemble it yourself.

You might therefore be surprised to learn that somebody paid £126,000 for this piece of furniture. That's right £126,000 for six shelves and a few dozen bits of cheap-looking pottery.

The reason, of course, is that this has not been sold as 'furniture', which it surely is, but as 'modern art', which these days appears to be a euphemism for 'useless art'. Assemble a few shelves, stick some cheap vases on them, give it a name – in this case, A Short History Of The China Trade – and that's '£126,000 please sir, have a nice day'.

Now that would be quite funny if it was just some pretentious London luvvie or vulgar Russian oligarch wasting their money on this junk. But unfortunately, it is you and I who has been taken for a ride.

A Short History of the China Trade is a recent addition to the Government Art Collection, comprising some 14,000 works. The taxpayer has also shelled out £2,346 for a child-like line drawing of a stickman on the wing of an aeroplane. Or for something more eye-catching, there is Caragh Thuring's 8ft canvas, featuring 12 lines of untidy handwriting about Anne and Agnes Bartholomew's wardrobe, or something like that. Ours for £28,500.

Then we come to In The Back by German Wolfgang Timmins: it is a photograph of three rather shabby looking office windows lit up at night. The Government paid £66,114.

Given the lack of visual appeal, it is unsurprising that most of this tat ends up in storage, which presumably the taxpayer also foots the bill for.

Now most reasonable people will understand the Government investing some money in great works of art, which can be displayed in art galleries, and used on important state occasions. I don't begrudge our leaders shelling out a few grand for a Constable, particularly if it stops it leaving the country. But £126,000 for some shelving and £66,114 for a photo of some windows in times of supposed austerity is taking the proverbial.

Still, if you can't beat 'em, join 'em, as the saying goes. I'm off to Argos for a flat-pack.

If change made would anyone notice the difference?



Gina Miller's Brexit list of 'all the options' effectively keeps the Remain vote intact



Lord Falconer – tutting over his suggestion that all drugs should be legalised



'You dirty rats' – remembered as James Cagney's immortal line in Each Dawn I Die

Legalise? Already easy to get drugs

I SUPPOSE we should all harrumph and tut-tut at Lord Falconer's suggestion that all drugs should be legalised. And yet. I have been watching and reporting on the so-called "war on drugs" for almost 50 years and it is easier today to get any substance you want, at a time and place to suit you, than I can ever recall. If, as Falconer suggests, a future Labour government chose to "legalise and regulate the supply of drugs," then most people would avoid them, some would try them and a tiny minority would become hooked on them and wreck their lives. In short, would anyone notice the difference?

FAREWELL, Labour. Goodbye, the Lib-Dems. And by now the Conservatives at their conference will have buried their differences, hammered out a Brexit deal acceptable to every MP and to our EU neighbours and arise, refreshed and invigorated, to prepare for another 20 years of government. Only joking!

THE best the PM can hope for is to delay the General Election until the constituency boundaries have been redrawn, as suggested by the Boundary Commissions, and the number of MPs reduced from 650 to 600. This, depending on your politics, will either redress a long-standing and unfair bias in favour of Labour or shift the goalposts for another Tory swindle.

MEANWHILE, we may all punch the air with joy at Labour's plan to wring billions out of the super-rich. At present, the richest one per cent of taxpayers comprises about 300,000 people earning more than £160,000 a year. They pay

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



about a quarter of all UK income tax. So how much more will they willingly pay before consulting the best tax-minimising accountants or emigrating? Has anyone done the sums?

THE Guardian, with its uncanny knack of focusing on the issues that matter to real people, delivers a piece headlined: "Brexit chisels away any right Britain had to the Parthenon marbles." Why, in Wolverhampton they talk of little else . . .

AND then you see Ms Gina Miller's list of 'all the options': 1) Leave the EU under the Chequers plan. 2) Leave the EU with no agreed deal. 3) Stay in the EU. You don't need a degree in maths to notice that this three-way poll effectively keeps the Remain vote intact while dividing the Leave vote, thus handing an 11th-hour victory to the Remainers. No-one doubts that Ms Miller is well educated and intelligent. But she seems to think the rest of us are as thick as mince.

IT is a good idea to invite the German president to the Cenotaph on Armistice Day. Even if we don't know who he is. Even if we weren't aware that Germany had a president. We should invite the President, who is Frank-Walter Steinmeier, for two good reasons. Firstly, it will draw

a veil over generations of mistrust and blood-letting between Britain and Germany, two very similar nations who, left to their own devices, get on rather well. Secondly, it will irritate the hell out of the French.

WE set off on a walk, following the footpaths through farmland near Chateau Rhodes. Entering one field, we met two cows, three calves and a bull the size of a house. I seem to recall reading in a book that mixed-sex and mixed-generation groups like this are settled, content and harmless. And then the bull started bellowing and we fled. I don't think the bull had read the same book.

A CZECH politician, V ra Jourová, who is the European Union's Justice Commissioner, has taken offence at the British media's treatment of the Salzburg summit. She is outraged at the Sun's headline describing European leaders as "EU Dirty Rats." This, she says, makes the case for "a European approach to media based on quality and smart regulation, if needed." Or as we English call it, censorship. But there is a culture gap here. Foreigners see the term "dirty rats" and filthy, disease-ridden rodents. Brits instantly recognise it as a joke. "You dirty rats" was James Cagney's immortal line in Each Dawn I Die (1939), and has been parodied by comedians from Morecambe & Wise to Dad's Army. Don't you find it chilling that foreign politicians could advocate controlling the British Press to protect the EU from criticism? Especially foreigners who know nothing of Eric and Ernie and have never heard of Private Pike.

TALKING POINT



Tolerance going up in a puff of vapour

WE'VE all seen it – and what's more pertinent, smelt it. Vaping – I mean, what's that all about?

As a former smoker, I may have been poacher-turned-gamekeeper at times, complaining about the stink on the clothes of people who indulge in ciggies.

At least though, I can see the point of smoking, with an actual taste that is pretty unique, even if there are differences between your Marlborough and the classic Benson and Hedges. But having been smoke-free myself for nigh on 30 years, I still like the smell of smoking itself if I am situated near to puffed-out plumes. Perhaps it's a nostalgia thing.

It was never a good idea for an asthmatic like me to smoke anyway, and I follow a long line of my family who smoked despite suffering with the condition. It still rankles that at any point I have to mention something to a health worker, it comes up that I am an ex-smoker, despite the fact that presumably, after so long being 'clean', whatever damage I did to my lungs is now academic.

But it is the vapers (no not the 'I Think I'm Turning Japanese' fellows – ask your dad!) that I have a beef with.

All of a sudden, they're everywhere, creating their own huge clouds of disgusting fruit-flavoured yuckiness. And they don't realise how silly they look with this Kazoo-like pipe thing stuck in their gobs. Obviously, this takes on a whole new tack when you're trying to eat a meal in a pub which hasn't as-of-yet outlawed the practice within its environs.

Tucking into a juicy steak whilst at the same time inhaling cherry-flavoured ooze can be nausea-inducing.

I can't get my head around the fact, that if these people were smokers at one point, they go from the pretty standard tobacco flavour, to whatever it is they now stick in their devices – which can be anything from strawberry sherbert to cola. Literally thousands are available, and you can even buy lucky dip bags!

I remember once, on a health kick as a young man, I thought herbal cigarettes was the way to go and bought a pack from the local chemists. Ughh! They were disgusting, and yet now people seem to be clamouring for a similar experience.

In time, the true extent of any damage to health by vaping will come to light and then the manufacturers will have to think of other ways to market their products. Who knows, maybe then they will start making boiled sweets from their e-liquids instead . . . mmm, blackcurrant liquorice humbug anyone?

GRAEME ANDREW

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EU thinks polite Britain is a soft touch

UNFORTUNATELY, British politeness is mistaken for weakness. Nice Mrs May has responded in kind to those in Europe who believe that the timing is right to demean everything that Britain stands for.

It is not unexpected and not unlike the relative who after desperately seeking your help for years may hold it against you and seek a time when he or she can rejoice in your downfall.

Jeremy Hunt, a man that if there was a Nobel Prize for politeness would win year after year, said 'The EU should not mistake British politeness

for weakness'. Unfortunately Jeremy, that will always be the case.

The level of politeness the older generation were taught is a somewhat alien concept in many parts of the world and is peculiar to Britain. It is an old-fashioned idea dreamed up to enable us to live closely together on our crowded island but one now being swept away by many of the younger generation of Brits.

How many times have I opened a door for some person only to be greeted not by a smile but a surly whisking past with never a thank you? How

many times in a checkout queue have I looked at the person behind with one item in hand, signalled him to come in front and received not even a nod? I keep telling myself that I must overcome what is now considered a weakness but, after all these years, it's too deeply inbred.

The attitude of the EU towards this country tends to mirror my experiences. We have been too giving, have respected their ideals and as a result we are now deemed a soft touch.

ALAN M ETHERIDGE
Dudley

Get active or health will suffer

THE news that only two out of 53 European countries are more overweight than Britain is a wake up call.

It can be difficult to keep active, especially for those with office jobs, but inactivity is making people unhealthy and unhappy.

Even a short brisk walk can have fantastic mental and physical health benefits, helping to prevent long-term chronic health conditions such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease and depression.

This isn't just about improving our current situation, it's about safeguarding the future of our children.

One in five boys and one in six girls of primary school age are classed as physically inactive, and one in three children leave primary school either overweight or obese.

This should be enough to tell us that inaction can't continue.

TANYA BRAUN
Head of Policy
Living Streets

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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If we cannot reach a resolution contact Ipsa at complaints@ipsa.co.uk or by post at Ipsa, c/o Gate House, 1 Farringdon Street, London, EC4M 7LG

Get some exercise by joining the Ramblers

I NOTICED recently the article in The Chronicle, headlined 'Region singled out as one of the worst for exercise'.

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For further information ring Mike Roach on 07796 513360 or me, Peter Brown, on (01384) 441619.

PETER BROWN
Wollaston

A theatre treat in the library

FOR £1.50 I enjoyed a professional musical show together with a choice of tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits. Where? At Dudley Library, last Saturday.

All credit to the hard-working library staff who organised a performance of Pop Music by Birmingham Repertory Theatre. A lot of effort goes into arranging something like this and I would like them to know their endeavours are appreciated.

Although sparsely attended, this did not deter the cast from giving the energetic performance a theatre audience would see. It was a thoroughly enjoyable Saturday afternoon, plus the cakes were gorgeous.

I do wonder whether a bit more advertising would have resulted in the larger audience that was richly deserved. I shall certainly keep my eyes open for any such future ventures in anticipation of another treat. Well done and thank you.

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8 You talkin' to me? Movie star De Niro at ICC

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, October 4, 2018

OSCAR-WINNING movie actor Robert De Niro is coming to Birmingham in one of only two appearances in the UK next month.

The 75-year-old New Yorker, famous for his roles in The Godfather II, Taxi Driver and Goodfellas, will share his life story at an exclusive black-tie dinner evening. A seat in the audience, including a meal, will cost at least £145 with some tickets costing as much as £365.

The visit follows high-profile appearances in the city from two other film heavyweights Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sylvester Stallone in recent years.

An Experience with Robert De Niro at the International Convention Centre will take place on Tuesday, November 27. The star's only other UK appearance will be in Leeds the night before.

The celebrated actor, who won two Oscars for playing Vito Corleone in The Godfather Part II and Jake LaMotta in Raging Bull, will be talking about his life and career.

As an outspoken critic of Donald Trump, he may just share his latest thoughts on the American president after using his speech at June's Tony Awards to criticise his leadership. The US leader responded by attacking the actor in a Twitter tirad.

Tickets were being sold via the website www.notebookbirmingham.com/robert-de-niro/

Opening of huge new Primark is put back

PRIMARK has postponed the opening of its biggest ever store, which was due to open in Birmingham city centre in time for Christmas.

The budget fashion chain's 160,000 sq ft store in the former Pavilions shopping centre is now scheduled to open in the spring.



Lead singer Jim Merris in action during the farewell concert



Soul fan Suzi dances with the band one more time



Adrian Chiles introduced the Red Lemons



A view of the audience from back stage



The Red Lemon Electric Blues Band with Adrian Chiles and Suzi Perry



Brass attack – the horn section

Red hot finale for blues band

BLACK Country-born celebrities Suzi Perry and Adrian Chiles joined the fun when Stourbridge soul group The Red Lemon Electric Blues Band signed off in style with their last ever concert.

Returning to the stage at Stourbridge Town Hall on Saturday night, where they played their first big gig in 1985, the group brought the house down as they decided to make the

last of their reunion concerts something extra special.

The show took fans through the band's 33-year history with a number of special guests including Climax Blues Band frontman Graham Dee. The night was hosted by TV presenters, Suzi Perry and Adrian Chiles. Suzi's father Tony Perry managed the group and she used to dance on stage with them during her

teenage years, whilst Adrian was the band's first bass guitarist.

Lead singer Jim Merris said: "We were absolutely buzzing to get back out there and play some real classic stuff. It was an action-packed show and it was very exciting. It's been two years since our last show together and I still get the same buzz. Unfortunately it's probably the last time we'll play together as logisti-

cally it doesn't work anymore, we're all living in a lot of different places.

"We've had a lot of great support over the years, including Adrian and Suzi. So many people have helped us and it all finished with one big night out – it was explosive.

"It was very poignant. I had a lump in my throat thinking about all the people who have supported us but are no longer with us."

Radio host and TV presenter Suzi even turned the clock back to the 1980s by joining 'Big Jim' and co on stage for a boogie.

She said: "This band has been a huge part of my childhood and teenage years and gave me some of the best days of my life, so it feels right to be a part of their final reunion. It's real Blues Brothers inspired music."

They said they'd restore my smile, but gave me back

WITH a memorable manly handshake, John Clews exudes a quiet, deep-seated confidence.

Articulate, transparent and at times philosophical, he's sharply focussed on why he's agreed to do this interview: "I want to give people like me hope," he declares.

The die-sinker knows a thing or two about clever engineering – he's been helping to construct specialised aircraft parts for more than 46 years – but with multiple failing teeth, instinctively knew that he too required the kind of skill that sets him apart as an experienced factory problem-solver.

For years, gum disease had insidiously invaded his mouth until toothache had become part of his daily routine. Intellectually, he knew he needed a dentist – and a good one – but gripped by a crippling fear he'd "pop the paracetamol" rather than face his demons.

"Fear is a terrible thing . . . I remember sitting in a dentist's chair and gripping the armrests so hard I pulled one of them off," John says.

"I came here and they promised to restore my smile, but they gave me back my life. It's true," he adds.

Practice principal Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS Eng GDC 108353 explains: "Periodontal disease is the biggest single cause of tooth loss in the UK and John's case is not unusual.

"There is plenty of study that examines the psychological impact of troublesome

My Life

John Clews enjoying a fresh out-look on life

Predictably reassuring

teeth on our lives. But like the insidious nature of gum disease, it can happen slowly as we make small changes to accommodate oral decline. Eventually, however, as things become more acute we are less able to adapt."

Matters came to head three years ago when John's family booked a weekend break at the Brecon Beacons to do a waterfalls walk. Adds John: "We take so many things for granted. We'd been walking a

good few hours and we were all ready for something to eat.

Lifestyle investment

"We came across a cafe serving bacon sandwiches. But they hadn't got any normal bread and the bacon was served with baguettes. There was no way my teeth could have coped with the crusty bread so I ended up with a piece of cheesecake. I

just so wanted a bacon sarnie, but my teeth had restricted my choice. That was it. At that point I decided to sort out my teeth.

"Too many times I'd go to a restaurant and look at 20 things on the menu and was only able to manage four of the choices. I'd really want steak, but I couldn't chew it; sometimes I just wouldn't go and eat out and I was always on my guard about smiling.

"And the toothache, the impact on daily

“The implant teeth are great and I can eat whatever I want and go out for a meal whenever I want.”

“It's a lifestyle investment for me and the difference it has made to my life is remarkable. It's a new kind of freedom.”

living . . . it just drags you down and confidence wanes," he says.

After having six implants in his upper jaw to support a complete arch of teeth and undergoing other remedial work, John is now able to live his life without teeth worries.

"The implant teeth are great and I can eat what I want, go out for a meal when I want and more than this . . . I've got my life back," says the keen carp fisherman.

Explaining he could have changed his car, John adds such an investment would be lost very quickly. "This [the implants] has been a lifestyle investment for me and the difference it's made to my life is remarkable. It's a new kind of freedom," he says.

And his dental phobia? "All the staff were fantastic, I felt so much at ease."

The surgery was carried out by North Street's implant dentist Owain Rees BDS DGD (UK) Dip Imp Dent (UCL) GDC 61576.



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'County lines' cocaine dealers caught by police



Nima Kamkar



Sima Kamkar



Wadah Razzak

COCAINE dealers from Halesowen were caught by police as part of a major operation targeting 'county lines' drug networks.

Nima and Sima Kamkar were arrested with Wadah Razzak by undercover officers in Gloucester city centre.

All three admitted possession with the intent to deal cocaine. At Gloucester Crown Court they each received 20-month sentences, suspended for two years.

The Kamkars, Nima, 20, and Sima, 19, both live in County Park Avenue, while Razzak lives in Colley Lane. All three were also banned from entering Gloucestershire.

The trio were stopped by Gloucestershire Police as part of a force move called Operation Tarak, targeting

'county lines' drug dealing. They were sentenced in May and their convictions were only revealed last week.

Nima and Sima Kamkar were each ordered to complete 200 hours of unpaid work, Razzak was given 240 hours.

'County lines' drug dealing networks see city-based gangs recruit children or vulnerable adults to carry or deliver drugs in towns and villages.

Convicted

The operation by Gloucestershire Police was launched in 2016 and has so far seen 70 people convicted by the courts.

Detective Chief Inspector Neil Smith said: "I am very proud of the work done by our officers in achieving such a successful conviction rate but I want to reassure the public that the work continues."

"My teams are committed to tracing

county lines back to their origin to disrupt and dismantle them.

"We regularly travel across the UK to hunt down dealers and identify those recruiting young, vulnerable children to traffic and sell drugs."

"The dealers feel they are invisible as they live hundreds of miles away – they are not"

PC Omar Patel said: "For almost two years the Force Crime Operations Team has worked tirelessly to bring county line offenders to justice."

"We're supported by a dedicated analytical team who ensure we have the best evidence to achieve the results we have."

"We are also grateful to the Courts and Judiciary. Prior to his retirement, Gloucester's Judge Jamie Tabor QC took these matters very seriously, as does his successor Judge Ian Lawrie."

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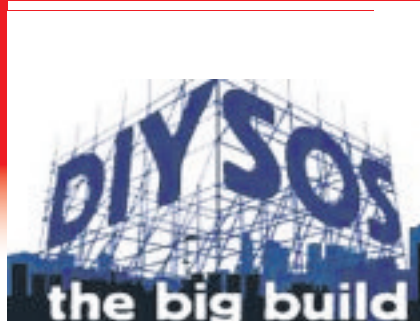
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Musical stars launch one Elf of a panto at Arena

WEST End superstars David Essex and Martine McCutcheon brought festive magic to the West Midlands at the launch of the region's biggest pantomime.

They will star in Elf at Birmingham Arena this December, performing to tens of thousands of fans in the iconic Christmas show.

The duo lined up last Tuesday at the launch of the event and said they were looking forward to creating a Christmas spectacle for families.

Martine said: "I can't wait. When this opportunity came round I jumped at it. My son is four and he's just the perfect age for this. I'll be bringing him with me and we'll create memories that will last a lifetime."

Favourite

"The Midlands is such a supportive area and I've always loved being here. You get the feeling the audience are willing you to win, they want you to do well, so I'm really looking forward to coming back."

National treasure David Essex said Birmingham and Wolverhampton were two of his favourite cities and he had only happy memories of playing locally. He said: "I always have a great time here, whether it's The Grand or The Civic, in Wolverhampton, I've done both of those, or over in Birmingham. People are so warm and down to earth."

"The show itself will be great. I'm at the stage of my career where I can pick and choose. When I got the call about this I thought it would be nice for my family and my grandchildren so I said yes." The show starts on December 20 and ends on December 24 and tickets are available from the box office.



Martine McCutcheon, Tam Ryan as Buddy the Elf and David Essex set for the panto

£7m council homes boost

COUNCILLORS in Sandwell have approved nearly seven million pounds worth of investment in council houses.

Senior cabinet members gave the green light to two schemes to help keep the borough's council homes well-maintained and up-to-date. One scheme will see around £4.55 million being spent on maintaining 40 high-rise blocks. In recent years the council has spent around £226m on a programme of major high-rise improvements which saw thousands of tenants benefit from new windows, render and cladding, and roofing works.

Council leader, councillor Steve Eling said: "This latest investment means that this work can be carried to ensure that the blocks continue to remain in good condition for many years to come so that our tenants continue to live in safe, good quality homes."

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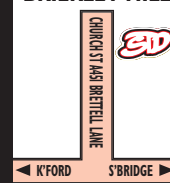
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Fun day at fire station is a big success



Zain Veres-Davies from Stetchford



Ian Baker from the Young Firefighters Association with Jonah Wilkinson-Jones and Max Beckerleg

HUNDREDS enjoyed a family fun day at Haden Cross Community Fire Station.

Visitors were treated to entertainment and live rescue demonstrations while also picking up advice on safety, crime prevention and healthy living as part of Sandwell's Safer 6 campaign.

Youngsters had the chance to sit in a fire appliance, look inside an ambulance and meet a police officer. For older children there was a chance to explore the Youth Bus, which is out and about across Sandwell's six towns over the coming weeks.

Sandwell Council is leading the Safer 6 campaign this year, with support from Sandwell Police, West Midlands Fire Service, schools, partner agencies and community and voluntary groups including Litterwatch, Sandwell Crime Prevention Panel and Agewell.

Each of Sandwell's six towns has a focus week. The focus turns to Tipton on Monday with a Safer 6 information roadshow from 10am to noon at Asda Great Bridge. See what is planned for each of Sandwell's six towns at www.sandwell.gov.uk/safer6 and follow the campaign on Twitter using the #Safer6 hashtag.



Front, station Commander Chris Wood

On the run for fitness as latest Couch to 5k takes off

SANDWELL Leisure Trust's latest Couch to 5K initiative in Cradley Heath has begun with a record 260 participants signing up.

The nine-week course sees non-runners start from scratch and collectively build up to managing 5,000 metres together, and began on September 23 at Old Hill Cricket Club.

It was intended not just as a new community partnership, designed to bring new people to the fitness and mental wellbeing programme, but also to attract extra members to the Haden Park Road facility.

It's being led by Sandwell Leisure Trust's (SLT's) Haden Hill Leisure Centre Fitness team with Old Hill CC volunteers assisting.

Interest has even surpassed the recently completed Couch to 5K event at the trust's Tipton Sports Academy on Wednesbury Oak Road, which had a retention rate twice the national average.

Neil Duggan from SLT's Marketing and Business Development team says: "Demand and interest has been phenomenal as word spreads about the inspirational body shape changing and health transformation experiences that our Couch to 5K participants have achieved. It was a stunning Sunday morning with family, friends and work colleagues cheering them on, it created a superb community atmosphere."



Runners at Old Hill Cricket Club in the SLT scheme



Celebrating their efforts as part of Couch to 5k

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PHOTOGRAPHY: NARESH PALL

14 Student's death being treated as 'unexplained'

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, October 4, 2018

DETECTIVES have confirmed that a body found in the River Severn at Worcester has been formally identified as missing student Thomas Jones, from Bromsgrove.

The 18-year-old who disappeared after arriving to study teaching at the city's university last week. West Mercia Police say they are treating his death as unexplained.

Two men had previously been arrested on suspicion of the murder of Thomas, who disappeared on September 19, but were released without charge on September 25.

Police confirmed that following the discovery of his body at the South Quay in Worcester on Friday, a post-mortem was being carried out to identify cause of death.

Superintendent Damian Pettit said: "I would like to extend my sincere condolences to Thomas' family. Over the course of the investigation, the support that they have received from friends and members of the public to help try and find Thomas has been greatly appreciated.

Scores of people have offered condolences to the West Bromwich Albion fan's family, including the club itself.



Emma Butler, Jane Williams, Dave Tyler and John Joseph Donovan



Plucky Baldrick the dog at the event



Mayor of Dudley Dave Tyler joins walkers and their pets

Memory Walk at Himley Hall

TWO legs, four legs, even three legs – pets of all shapes, sizes and abilities (alongside their owners) took part in a charity walk at Himley Hall.

funds for charity Alzheimer's Society.

It followed the success of last year's walk, organised by the then Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Dave Tyler, who also led the event this year.

Pets

He said: "It was another success. When we did it last year we had people asking 'are you doing one next year?' and how could we say no? I know it was a bit late in the season for walking but we had about 120 people turn up – and a lot of pets too!"

Councillor Tyler said the 'star' pet this year was little three-legged dog Baldrick, who completed the walk in his special wheelchair.

He added: "Baldrick was the star of the show, in his little wheelchair.

"He was very popular."

Walkers set off from the Himley Hall grounds at 11am on Sunday, and participants were able to choose whether they wanted to take part in the 2km, 4km or 6km walk.

Donation

Hundreds of pounds have been raised for Alzheimer's Society through the memory walk, but Coun-

cillor Tyler said it will be a few more days before the final total is known.

"There is still time for people to make a donation if they haven't got round to it," he said. "As it gets bigger and bigger we hope it will be an annual event. It's nice that it's quite small and local though, rather than thousands of people."

Visit justgiving.com/fundraising/dave-tylmemorywalk to donate.

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Hundreds of Christmas jobs on offer

HUNDREDS of jobs are up for grabs at Debenhams shops across the West Midlands in the run-up to Christmas.

The department store chain is hunting for up to 400 temporary members of staff for its branches across the region, including its major store at the Merry Hill shopping centre.

The new recruits will be working on the sales floor during the company's busiest times including Black Friday on November 23, Christmas and the Boxing Day sales.

Successful applicants will start mid-November and work until the beginning of January – but could be kept on in the long-run.

The drive covers Debenhams' year-

old anchor store in Wolverhampton's Mander Centre, as well as branches in Walsall, Merry Hill, Birmingham's Bullring and Fort Dunlop, Lichfield, Leamington Spa, Coventry, Nuneaton and Worcester.

The chain is aiming to be regarded as the go-to destination for shoppers at Christmas.

Planning

Alan Macera, manager at Birmingham's branch, said: "We begin planning months before the festivities start to make sure we deliver the high level of service that customers expect from Debenhams."

The retailer is keen to hear from

candidates who have a strong 'can-do' approach and are eager to learn the ropes.

Previous retail experience is not essential, with bosses saying they have looked more recently to the hospitality industry for skills, experience and people that are 'fun, sociable and have a genuine love of shopping'.

Mr Macera added: "Many colleagues who join us over this period stay on as permanent members of the team."

More information on vacancies and how to apply can be found at www.debenhams-careers.com website. Alternatively, jobseekers can also text JOBS to 81066.

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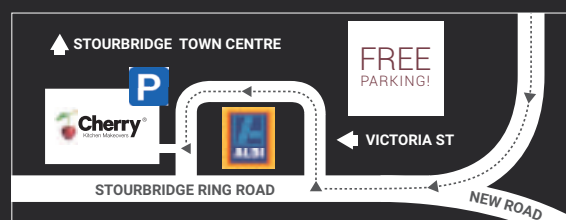
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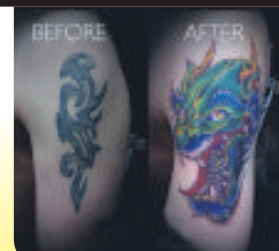
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Hospice duo cycle length of Britain to raise funds

THE BOSS of Mary Stevens Hospice and a therapist from the Stourbridge charity took on a gruelling 1,000-mile cycle ride to raise funds.

Stevan Jackson and Anne Howell, both based at the hospice in Oldswinford, completed a two-week ride that saw them use pedal power to take on the epic length-of-Britain journey from Land's End in Cornwall to John O'Groats on the north coast of Scotland.

The hospice chief executive and therapist battled win and rain for much of their journey as they took on the challenge to raise funds for Mary Stevens Hospice, raise awareness of its work in the Black Country and also to celebrate Stevan's 65th birthday.

So far, the duo have raised more than £4,000 for the Hagley Road hospice.

Impressive

Mr Jackson said: "I was delighted to be part of the Land's End to John O'Groats cycling challenge in support of my two colleagues Anne Howell, who was the outstanding driving force behind it, and Ruth Davies who provided impressive support to our small team."

"It was a privilege to be involved and Anne's initiative has helped to raise significant funds that will help those with palliative and end of life needs whom we are here to care for."

"I am now just trying to adjust to life out of the saddle."

Ms Howell added: "Mary Stevens Hospice is the best place I have ever worked and I am so proud to be part of a team who work so hard to ensure that the patients in our care receive



Stevan Jackson and Anne Howell celebrate finishing their epic cycle ride

the best treatment available. "I know so many of our patients would love to do this challenge and sadly aren't able to, so to have done this for them really is the most incredible feeling."

"This cycle ride is the hardest thing I have ever done. However, I know it pales in comparison to battling a life-limiting illness so we were able to draw on our patients, and the motivation they give us, whenever the going

got tough or the weather did its best to try and dampen our spirits."

The hospice relies on the local community to raise nearly £3 million a year needed to run the hospice and its services to help those with life-shortening illnesses and their families. Specialist services are provided at a recently refurbished in-patient unit and day therapies Clinic. Care at home is also offered where appropriate.

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Apart from all the Weddings Benjamins is always busy with Birthday Parties, Anniversaries, Christmas Parties etc. Benjamins is always



pleased to help out with charity fundraisers hosting a charity fundraiser Boxing Event on Saturday 13th October organised by local boxing club owner Pete Jackson. Then there is a Charity fundraiser Wrestling Event, family orientated.

Yet another fundraiser in

November for The Orchard School featuring 'Robbie Williams' and Ollie Murs' tributes. Something new at Benjamins has been their Thursday is Fry-Day with Fish and Chips, Mushy Peas, Bread and Butter for only £5 and only £7.50 with a pint of Carling included. If you need a venue to raise funds for your cause get in touch with Benjamins and find out what they have to offer. Another special event is their clairvoyant and Medium night featuring 'Angel Eyes Helen' with tickets going really fast as the date approaches.



If you are into your 80's music you won't want to miss 'Kick Up The 80's Band' night on Friday 26th October with a disco as well.

And if reggae music is your favourite the 'JOHNNY2BAD on 23rd November will be a night remember if their last show was anything to go by when over 300 people danced the night away to the very best UB40 tribute around.

You've got to be quick if you are planning a Christmas Party at Benjamin's 'Share a party', there is only one date left and already that has only limited availability.

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FRIDAY 26TH OCTOBER
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WEDNESDAY 31ST OCTOBER
ANGEL EYES HELEN Clairvoyant and Medium, starts at 7pm.
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FRIDAY 23RD NOVEMBER
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Most of our clients come to us having already made standard Mirror Wills, or they've been meaning to make a Will but simply haven't got around to it. With Property Trust Wills, yourself and your spouse/partner each leave your half share of the home to the children in Trust, but state that they are not to receive it during the lifetime of the surviving spouse/partner.

This half would then NOT be included in any future means test calculations for care fees. The surviving spouse is free to sell their share of the home, raise cash or move house. Your children are powerless to intervene but simply have to wait for their inheritance, as they would have done previously.

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It also includes details of Lasting Power of Attorney and our special Bloodline Trust Wills which help prevent your children and grandchildren from losing their inheritance due to a child's divorce, remarriage or financial difficulties.

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April King has over 50 offices across the UK.

ELO saying hello to Jeff's home crowd

Birmingham rock legend Jeff Lynne will return to his home city for a run of three shows at the city centre's Arena on October 10, 12 and 13.

Jeff Lynne has breathed new life into his band in recent years, since playing for Children In Need in 2013. He returned to live action the following year and in 2015 he released his first new music in 14 years, *Alone in the Universe*, which was his band's 13th album and earned a platinum disc after reaching the UK top five.

ELO had previously sold more than 50 million records worldwide and enjoyed huge success during the 1970s and 1980s when they enjoyed 20 top 20 UK hits plus 15 hits on the US Billboard Hot 100.

Lynne was blown away by the reaction when ELO played Hyde Park in 2014 – a show that sold out in 15 minutes.

Within a year, Lynne's ELO had played at the Grammy Awards for the first time, performing *Evil Woman* and *Mr Blue Sky*, and in summer 2016 the band played the Pyramid Stage at the Glastonbury Festival. Last year Lynne's ELO played Wembley Stadium, having been inducted into The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

"I was a little worried about Wembley," said Jeff. "But our fans are the best because they not only showed up, they sang along with all their hearts."

"I will never forget standing on stage, looking at that audience and hearing the sound of 60,000 of them singing my tunes – and sounding great, I might add."

Stand-up comic Josh Pugh in action



Feeling free to laugh

Birmingham Comedy Festival returns next week with a line-up including Ab Fab's Joanna Lumley, Rich Hall, Jimeoin, James Acaster, Tom Binns, Robin Ince and lots more.

Established in 2001, the annual festival has welcomed some of the biggest names in stand-up comedy and was set up to highlight the city's vibrant, but then largely unsung, comedy scene.

The 2018 festival kicks off with the EG Birmingham Comedy Festival Breaking

Talent Award 2018 at the Glee Club tomorrow (Friday). Competing are West Bromwich's Laura Monmoth, Brummie NHS worker Sham Zaman, Hall Green duo Good Kids (teachers Kieran Ahern and Tom Dowling), Stoke's Phil Carr and Staffs comic Adam Beardsmore.

Also returning are the festival's popular Free Half-Dayers on successive Sundays (October 7 and 14) featuring 16 Edinburgh Fringe style one-hour shows – it's like a festival within the festival. The events take place at Cherry Reds and The Victoria pub from 1.15pm, both on John Bright Street, near Grand Central.

Events this Sunday include a revival of 1960s radio show *Round The Horne*, plus Good Kids, Lindsey Santoro and Aaron Twitchen, as well as Dudley's Danndy Clives, Tom Ham, Alex Hylton, Jay Handley and Star Trek devotee Rik Carranza. The following Sunday features The Elvis Dead creator Rob Kemp with his new show, comedy troupe Fat Penguin Improv, Coronation Street's Gareth Berliner, plus Josh Pugh and Phil Pagett's Knowledge Club, among others.

See www.bhamcomfest.co.uk for more details.

Rock and reggae on gig agenda

Reggae veteran Toots Hibbert brings his Maytals to Digbeth's O2 Institute on Wednesday (Oct 10).

Toots and the Maytals were formed in 1960s Jamaica and helped coin the name reggae with their 1968 ska hit *Do the Reggay*. Their hits include *Bam Bam*, *Monkey Man*, *54-46 That's My Number*, *Pressure Drop* and *Funky Kingston*.

Tomorrow (Friday), The Coral are at the Institute following the release of new album *Move Through The Dawn*. That's the same night London quartet Stereo Honey play the Sunflower Lounge in Brum city centre. Over in Kings Heath, ex-member of The Beautiful South, Alison Wheeler, sings their songs as part of *The South at the Hare & Hounds*.

Following Genesis guitarist Steve Hackett's sold out show at Symphony Hall tomorrow, a Genesis Extravaganza is staged by The Musical Box at the same venue on Saturday. Stourbridge heavy metal heroes Diamond Head rock the Robin in Bilston on Saturday and Black Country blues queen, Joanne Shaw Taylor, has sold out her homecoming show at the Robin on Sunday.

Scottish trio Fatherson, who have released new album *Sum Of All Your Parts*, play the Sunflower Lounge on Saturday.

Sunday sees Californian pop-punk band The Story So Far at the Institute. Former Spandau Ballet singer Tony Hadley croons at Symphony Hall on Monday.

On the tribute scene, Whole Lotta DC play the Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton, on Saturday and Black Country Beatles are at the Robin next Friday (Oct 12).



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8pm and Saturday from 12noon to 9pm.

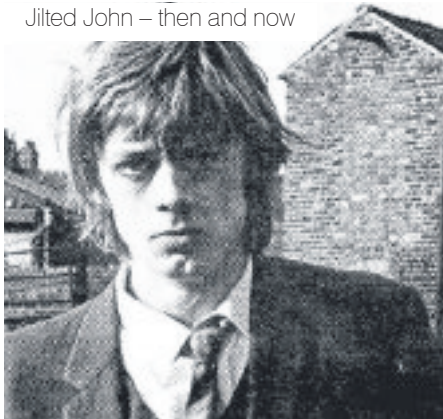
Breakfast is available on Friday, Saturday and Sunday between 8.30am and 11am.

The spokesman added: "Whether it's brunch, lunch or dinner you're joining us for, call to reserve your table on (01562) 850311."



AT YOUR LEISURE

Jilted John – then and now



'Ere we go... 2... 3... 40! Jilted John has returned

To celebrate Jilted John's 40th anniversary and relive the summer of '78 that saw millions chanting 'Gordon is a moron', actor and musician Graham Fellows is recreating his first comic creation.

He is going on tour with a band in tow and brings the 'Ere We Go 2... 3... 40!! show to Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms on Friday, October 12, on what will be the one-hit-wonder's

first tour. The punk comedy classic about John's dismal love life was voted Best One Hit Wonder of All Time by listeners to Steve Lamacq's 6 Music show, and will be performed alongside other favourites from the True Love Stories album.

Fellows was a drama student in Manchester when Jilted John took off. He later had a role in Coronation Street and created comedy character John Shuttleworth, who featured in several BBC Radio 4 series.

On his big hit, Graham says: "It was

a series of happy accidents. I wrote the song in the canteen of my drama school. Someone showed me how to tune the guitar to an open chord to create that distinctive riff. I did a few demos. I went to see these hippies who had a record label and were releasing stuff by the Buzzcocks. They agreed to record it. The whole thing must have cost £200."

Support at Wolverhampton will come from another one hit wonder, John Otway, who charted in 1977 with Really Free.

Joanna says it's going to be absolutely fabulous

Joanna Lumley will bring her first ever live tour, It's All About Me, to Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Tuesday.

She will take the full-house audience through her hilarious and fascinating adventures, recounting some never-heard-before stories.

She will be joined on stage by friend and producer Clive Tulloh, who will put to Joanna questions from the audience.

Joanna said: "It's utterly thrilling to start planning the stories I can tell, and the rapture – and gratitude, to be fair – with which I shall greet the audiences. Nothing like this has come my way before, and I may have to be dragged off with a hook at the end of each show. I think it will be fabulous."

TV presenter, traveller, actor and all-round national treasure, Joanna first burst onto our screens as Purdey in The New Avengers in 1976, also creating an iconic hairstyle, going on to star in Sapphire & Steel.

Before that she had roles in Are You Being Served?, Coronation Street, in film as a victim of Christopher Lee's Dracula and as a Bond girl opposite George Lazenby in On Her Majesty's Secret Service.

She became a comedy legend with her Bafta-award winning creation Patsy Stone in Absolutely Fabulous opposite Jennifer Saunders.

From the swinging sixties up to her globe-trotting TV documentaries, Joanna will have many tales to tell in a gallop through almost 50 years in show business.



Joanna Lumley

Cirque Du Soleil stage latest egg-travaganza Guests have the write stuff for literature festival

Cirque Du Soleil, the world's biggest circus, is back in Birmingham this week when the international troupe bring Ovo to Arena Birmingham.

Ovo, meaning 'egg' in Portuguese, is a headlong rush into a colourful eco-system teeming with life, where insects work, eat, crawl, flutter, play, fight and look for love in a non-stop riot of energy and movement.

Having entertained more than five million people worldwide since the show premiered in Montreal in 2009 as a Big Top show, Ovo embarks on a world tour with an even bigger production. It features 50 acrobats, trapeze artists and clowns in the bizarre, colourful costumes that Cirque is famous for.

The show opened last night (Wednesday) and continues until Sunday with 8pm performances plus matinees on Saturday and Sunday. Tickets start from £52.75. The Birmingham performances will mark the last UK dates of the European tour.

Wolverhampton-born chef and author Nigel Slater and Wolverhampton-raised columnist and best-selling author Caitlin Moran feature in Birmingham Literature Festival.

Poet Liz Berry, from Sedgley, will appear in a National Poetry Day event today (Thursday) at 5.30pm in Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, to start the festival which runs until October 14. The new Poet Laureate and Young Poet Laureate for Birmingham will be announced at the event.

Caitlin Moran is in conversation with journalist Sali Hughes in the conservatoire's Bradshaw Hall tomorrow (Friday) and the event has sold out. Nigel Slater and Ravinder Bhogal will discuss their passion for food and writing on October 14 at The Studio, Birmingham Rep, at 3.30pm, introduced by Wulfrunian Sathnam Sanghera, best-selling author of The Boy with the Topknot. Other speakers at the festival will include comedian Alexei Sayle, musician Viv Albertine and broadcaster Lauren Laverne. See www.birminghamliteraturefestival.org



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COMMERCIAL FEATURE

MUSICAL TREATS IN THE NEW WELLINGTON

Musical fans from across the region are rubbing their hands together for a musical extravaganza with Live Entertainment Friday and Saturday Night.

The New Wellington in Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill, is not only treating its patrons to great entertainment it is also a great place to eat, drink and socialise.

Set on the main Stourbridge to Dudley Road, not far off Brierley Hill high street, the venue offers a carvery all day everyday from 12 noon to 8pm with a selected main menu from 5pm. With Kids eating Free throughout the school holidays. T's & C's apply

For the early started amongst us they also offer a buffet style all you can eat breakfast from 8am to 11am, which has been brought back by popular demand.

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AT YOUR LEISURE

CHOICE



Virtue Dixon

Troubles: The Life After (BBC2, 9.30pm)

An intimate account of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, told through the stories of people who lost loved ones during the conflict, which lasted more than 30 years. Contributors include Virtue Dixon, whose daughter Ruth was killed on her 24th birthday while celebrating at the Droppin' Well pub in Ballykelly in December 1982. An Irish National Liberation Army bomb brought the roof down, killing both civilians and British soldiers, and Virtue tells the story of the aftermath from her perspective.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Raymond Blanc: How to Cook Well. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Rugby League – Super League Playoffs Highlights. **2.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **3.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.00** Final Score. **5.20** BBC News. **5.30** Regional Programme. **5.40** Pointless Celebrities.

6.30 **Strictly Come Dancing.** Tess Daly and Claudia Winkelman present as the pro-celebrity dance competition continues. Last week, the couples were given their first taste of the pressures of avoiding elimination, and the tension does not let up as the second round of the competition proper gets under way with Movie Week. As in previous competitions, the 14 duos are challenged to come up with routines that pay homage to Hollywood's greatest films, and as always, Shirley Ballas, Craig Revel Horwood, Bruno Tonioli and Darcy Bussell are on hand to deliver their verdict on the stars' performances. Viewers at home then get a chance to have their say over which performers to back ahead of the results show tomorrow night.

8.35 **Casualty.** Jacob is shocked to find Omo, his schizophrenic mother, has arrived in the ED along with his son Blake. Elle goes to deal with Omo, who refuses to believe there is anything wrong and resists treatment, thinking that Elle is keeping her there on Jacob's orders. Elsewhere, Gem asks Ruby if she can swap bedrooms and is delighted when she agrees.

9.25 **Killing Eve.** Eve undertakes her first surveillance operation, and Villanelle is sent to England to eliminate a member of British intelligence – without knowing who the target is.

10.10 **BBC News:** Weather; National Lottery Update.

10.30 **Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker presents the latest Premier League highlights, including Tottenham Hotspur v Cardiff City at Wembley Stadium.

11.55 **The NFL Show.** Mark Chapman is joined by Osi Umenyiora and Jason Bell to present highlights of Thursday night's game – New England Patriots v Indianapolis Colts at Gillette Stadium.

12.25 Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.30** BBC News.

BBC2

6.30 Top Class. (R) **7.00** Marrying Mum and Dad. (R) **7.30** All Over the Place: Europe. (R) **8.00** The Denigeneers. (R) **8.30** Absolute Genius with Dick & Dom. (R) **9.00** Planet Dinosaur. (R) **9.30** Elephant Diaries. (R) **10.00** The Animal's Guide to Britain. (R) **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** The Incredible Spice Men. (R) **12.30** Great British Menu. (R) **1.00** Great British Menu. (R) **1.30** Hairys Bikers' Best of British. (R) **2.15** Giraffes: Africa's Gentle Giants. (R) **3.15** Saving Lives at Sea. (R) **4.15** Trust Me, I'm a Doctor. (R) **4.45** Monkman & Seagull's Genius Guide to Britain. (R) **5.15** Flog It! (R) **5.50** Dad's Army. (R)

6.20 **Film: Mr Holmes.** (2015) An elderly Sherlock Holmes retires to a seaside farmhouse in the aftermath of the Second World War, and struggles to cope with his diminished faculties. Assisted by his housekeeper's inquisitive son, he tries to piece together the events of the one case that he failed to solve. Period mystery based on Mitch Cullin's novel A Slight Trick of the Mind, starring Ian McKellen.

8.00 **A House Through Time.** Documentary charting 180 years of British history as lived through by the successive inhabitants of a terraced house in Liverpool, from the 1840s to the present day. (R)

9.00 **Live at the Apollo.** Sitcom star and The Last Leg regular Josh Widdicombe welcomes Londoner Nathan Caton and Australian comic Celia Pacquola to the stage at London's Hammersmith Apollo. (R)

9.30 **Troubles: The Life After.** An intimate account of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, told through the stories of people who lost loved ones during the conflict, which lasted more than 30 years.

10.50 **Snowfall.** New series. Hard-hitting drama about the beginnings of the crack epidemic in 1980s Los Angeles. Damson Idris, Carter Hudson and Emily Rios star.

11.35 **Later Weekend with Jools Holland.** Muse perform songs from their upcoming release Simulation Theory and Southampton-born Laurel makes her first appearance on the show, with music from her full-length debut Dogviolet.

12.40 **Film:** Department Q: The Absent One. (2014) **2.35** Trust. (R) **3.30** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Dino Dana. **6.10** Super 4. (R) **6.25** Super 4. (R) **6.35** Make It Pop. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.15** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: ToonMarty. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: The Haunted Hathaways. (R) **9.05** Scrambled!: Mighty Magiswords! (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** James Martin's Saturday Morning. **11.40** The Island Strait. (R) **12.15** The X Factor. (R) **1.15** ITV News: Weather. **1.30** **Film:** Johnny English Reborn. (2011) Spy comedy sequel, starring Rowan Atkinson. **3.30** Tipping Point: Lucky Stars. (R) **4.30** The Chase. (R) **5.30** ITV News: Weather. **5.50** Regional Programme: Weather.

6.00 **Film: Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix.** (2007) The young wizard struggles to convince his fellow sorcerers that the evil Lord Voldemort has returned to life. When Hogwarts headmaster Dumbledore is ousted in favour of a sadistic replacement, Harry realises he must take matters into his own hands, uniting his fellow pupils to form a secret army and training them for the inevitable confrontation to come. Fantasy adventure sequel, starring Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson, Rupert Grint and Gary Oldman.

8.35 **The X Factor.** Dermot O'Leary hosts the third and final Six Chair Challenge episode, in which the acts perform individually before the judges choose who will be selected for the next stage. However, even if a contender is selected to go through to the next stage, the judges are free to change their minds and ditch them if a more promising alternative comes along later in the show. However, this year each judge has a golden button, which guarantees one act in their line-up a place in the final six, meaning that once they have a seat, they cannot be swapped out.

9.50 **The Jonathan Ross Show.** The host is joined by guests Gordon Ramsay, Fred Sirieix, Gino D'Acampo, Bear Grylls and Romesh Ranganathan.

10.55 ITV News: Weather. **11.15** **Film:** Twins. (1988) **1.05** Jackpot247. **3.00** Long Lost Family. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Formula 1 Japanese Grand Prix Qualifying Live. **8.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.05** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.30** Frasier. (R) **10.00** Frasier. (R) **10.30** Formula 1 Japanese Grand Prix Qualifying Replay. **12.30** Car SOS. (R) **1.30** Four in a Bed. (R) **1.55** Four in a Bed. (R) **2.30** Four in a Bed. (R) **3.00** Four in a Bed. (R) **3.30** Four in a Bed. (R) **4.00** A Place in the Sun. (R) **4.35** The People's Vet. **5.35** Escape to the Chateau. DIV. (R)

6.30 **Channel 4 News.** **7.00** **Britain at Low Tide.** Tori Herridge uncovers the story behind a dramatic night in 1976 when fishing trawler the Admiral Von Tromp went wildly off course in the North Sea, after setting off in Scarborough and running aground in Whitby, North Yorkshire, with the wreckage still visible on the shores of Saltwick Bay to this day. The massive remains of a First World War fort lead Tori to tales of love in the East Yorkshire hamlet of Kilsnake, and she learns the strange fate of two ships that were built in Hull but ended up on top of a mountain in Peru. (R)

8.00 **Britain's Most Historic Towns.** Alice Roberts tells the story of Viking England by studying the history of York. She takes part in a Viking battle, meets the metal detectorists behind one of the UK's greatest archaeological finds and gets her hands on an almost 1,000-year-old po. Aerial archaeologist Ben Robinson takes to the skies to see how the layout of York reflects its history. (R)

9.00 **Film: Deadpool.** (2016) Premiere. A fast-talking former mercenary develops terminal cancer, and agrees to be the subject in a shady experiment in the hope of a cure. The procedure leaves him horribly disfigured, but also possessing superhuman abilities which he immediately puts to use in a quest for revenge on the man responsible for his hideous appearance. Superhero comedy adventure, starring Ryan Reynolds.

11.10 **Film: Conan the Barbarian.** (2011) A warrior seeks revenge on the warlord who killed his father, and tries to stop him magically making himself all-powerful. Fantasy adventure, with Jason Momoa and Stephen Lang.

1.05 Experimental. (R) **2.00** Hollyoaks. (R) **4.05** Vet on the Hill.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **9.50** Rise of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.05** Rise of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.20** The Gadget Show. (R) **11.15** Criminals: Caught on Camera. (R) **11.45** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.40** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.40** Police Interceptors. (R) **2.45** Live Gallagher Premiership Rugby Union. **5.15** World's Scariest Plane Landings. (R)

6.00 **Bad Tenants, Rogue Landlords.** Brent Council officers find a severely overcrowded house in north London, while Harrow Council try to help a family forced to sleep in one room due to leaks coming from the roof. (R)

6.45 **Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away!** Stewart and Iain confront a woman in Cheshire refusing to pay a veterinary practice, claiming her dog was misdiagnosed. Paul and Max chase £5,000 owed by a banned company director. (R)

7.35 **Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away!** Gary and Paul try to recover a debt owed by a Kent publican – only to find themselves in the middle of a family at war – and Stewart and Elmor repossess a property in Liverpool. (R)

8.30 **5 News Weekend.**

8.35 **Doomsday of Pompeii: Rome Unwrapped.** Documentary about the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD, which spilled seven million tonnes of debris onto the city of Pompeii and sealed the fate of more than 1,000 people.

9.35 **Eight Days That Made Rome: The Spartacus Revolt.** Bettany Hughes recalls the moment that Spartacus, a Thracian gladiator fighting for the entertainment of the Romans, broke out of gladiator school and started a slave revolt. (R)

10.35 **The Murder of Julius Caesar.** Novelist Robert Harris and historian Neil Faulkner are among the experts examining the events surrounding the assassination of the Roman dictator. (R)

11.35 **Helicopter Pursuits: Caught on Camera.** A compilation of police helicopter chases taken from the first three series of the documentary. (R)

12.05 **FIA World Rally Championship Highlights.** **12.35** SuperCasino. **3.10** Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. (R) **4.45** Wildlife SOS. (R) **5.10** House Doctor. (R) **5.35** Divine Designs. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four **7.00** Monkey Planet **8.00** Big Cats **9.00** Mystery Road **10.45** Inside No 9 **11.45** I'm Not In Love: The Story of 10cc **12.45** Top of the Pops: 1986 **1.45** Monkey Planet **2.45** Big Cats **3.45** Close

ITV2 **11.25** The X Factor **12.15** You've Been Framed! Gold **1.20** **Film:** You've Got Mail (1998) **2.25** FYI Daily **2.30** **Film:** You've Got Mail (1998) **3.40** **Film:** Yes Man (2008) **4.40** FYI Daily **4.45** **Film:** Yes Man (2008) **5.45** **Film:** Twister (1996) **6.45** FYI Daily **6.50** **Film:** Twister (1996) **7.00** **Film:** The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift (2006) **9.00** FYI Daily **9.05** **Film:** The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift (2006) **10.10** **Film:** Juice **10.55** Family Guy **12.50** American Dad! **1.50** The Cleveland Show **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **3.00** Teleshopping

ITV3 **3.10** **Film:** Carry On Up the Jungle (1970) **5.00** Lewis **7.00** Midsomer Murders **9.00** Endeavour **11.00** A Touch of Frost **1.10** On the Buses **2.05** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4 **12.00** Prawn Stars **1.30** **ITV** Racing: Live from Ascot. Coverage from Ascot. Newmarket and Redcar. **4.00** World Cup Rivalries: Brazil v Italy **4.20** Prawn Stars **6.10** Mr Bean **7.20** **Film:** Police Academy **3: Back in Training** (1986) **8.20** FYI Daily **8.25** **Film:** Police Academy **3: Back in Training** (1986) **9.00** **Film:** Green Zone (2010) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05** **Film:** Green Zone (2010) **11.15** **Film:** Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy (2011) **12.15** FYI Daily **12.20** **Film:** Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy (2011) **1.50** The Americans **2.40** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4 **11.05** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **12.05** The Big Bang Theory **1.00** The Great British Bake Off **2.20** The Great British Bake Off: An Extra Slice **3.30** **Film:** Ice Age: The Meltdown (2006) **5.15** Rudeish! Tube Shorts **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** **Film:** A Good Day to Die Hard (2013) **11.00** Gogglebox **1.10** The Inbetweeners **2.20** Celebs Go Dating **3.10** Gogglebox **4.05** How I Met Your Mother **Film4**

11.00 The Boxrolls (2014) **12.55** Spy Kids 4: All the Time in the World (2011) **2.45** Hotel for Dogs (2009) **4.50** First Daughter (2004) **7.00** Taxi (2004) **9.00** The Wolf of Wall Street (2013) Martin Scorsese's fact-based drama, starring Leonardo DiCaprio. **12.40** Troll Hunter (2010) **2.55** Close

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CHOICE



Doctor Who (BBC1, 6.45pm)
Jodie Whittaker makes her debut as the 13th Doctor, who crash lands following an explosive regeneration that has apparently destroyed the Tardis. She finds herself lost and alone in Sheffield, with no memory of who she used to be - and has an encounter with three seemingly ordinary people whose lives are about to change for ever. Bradley Walsh, Tosin Cole and Mandip Gill co-star as the Doctor's new companions.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **8.35** Match of the Day. (R) **10.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **11.00** Regional Programme. **11.30** Sunday Morning Live. **12.30** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Money for Nothing. (R) **2.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **2.45** Points of View. **3.00** Songs of Praise. **3.35** Eat Well for Less? (R) **4.35** Pointless Celebrities. **5.20** BBC News. **5.35** Regional Programme. **5.45** Countryfile.
6.45 **Doctor Who.** New series. Jodie Whittaker makes her debut as the 13th Doctor, who is left with no memory following an explosive regeneration that has apparently destroyed the Tardis.
7.45 **Strictly Come Dancing: The Results.** Claudia Winkleman and Tess Daly reveal the next couple to leave the contest. Plus, a performance by Gladys Knight, singing her 1989 James Bond theme song Licence to Kill.
8.30 **Still Open All Hours.** David Jason stars as Granville in this follow-up to Open All Hours, now running the shop with his son Leroy after inheriting the business.
9.00 **The Cry.** Joanna finds herself at the centre of a media circus as the world's press descends on Wilde Bay to report on the disappearance. She becomes obsessed with people forming theories about her child's fate on the internet, adopting a fake identity to join in the discussion. As the police investigation continues, she and Alistair are forced to adopt different strategies for coping with the constant intrusion, a pressure which threatens to break their relationship.
10.00 BBC News.
10.20 Regional Programme.
10.30 **Match of the Day 2.** Mark Chapman reviews the day's Premier League action, introducing highlights of Liverpool v Manchester City, Fulham v Arsenal and Southampton v Chelsea.
11.40 **The Apprentice.** The business-based reality show returns, with 16 candidates hoping to scoop a £250,000 investment from Alan Sugar, who sends the hopefuls to Malta for their first task. (R)
12.40 The Apprentice: You're Fired. (R)
1.10 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.15** BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 Coast. (R) **6.35** Around the World in 80 Gardens. (R) **7.35** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** The Beechgrove Garden. (R) **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** Great British Menu. (R) **12.00** Great British Menu. (R) **12.30** Great British Menu. (R) **1.00** Hairy Bikers' Best of British. (R) **2.00** Alec Guinness: Talking Pictures. (R) **2.45** Film: The Man in the White Suit. (1951) **4.05** Animal Park. (R) **4.15** Super Giant Animals. (R) **5.15** King Arthur's Britain: The Truth Unearthed. (R)
6.15 **Grammar Schools: Who Will Get In?** Students face their mock GCSEs, while the head teachers of Erith and Townley announce a plan to bring both schools into the same trust. Last in the series. (R)
7.15 **Philippines: Island Treasures.** Mike Dilger and Rico Hizon go in search of rich culture and rare wildlife in one of the greatest biodiversity hotspots in the world – the Philippines.
8.00 **The Mediterranean with Simon Reeve.** New series. A journey around the region, examining the challenges currently facing the nations in the area. In the first episode, Simon visits Malta, southern Italy and Albania.
9.00 **Last Chance Lawyer New York City.** New series. Documentary following the exploits of criminal lawyer Howard Greenberg, who wages "war" against the US government from his office in Brooklyn.
9.45 **Mock the Week.** Topical comedy quiz show. (R)
10.15 **No Activity.** Stokes and Hendy are joined in the car by Carol's son Lachy. Meanwhile, Carol complains to a shocked April that she's been put on a shift with Lee.
10.40 **No Activity.** Carol is excited about her new colleague, while Stokes is trying out a new nap regime. Bernie is stunned to learn that Elizabeth has always wanted to be a stand-up comedian.
11.10 **Billion Dollar Deals and How They Changed Your World.** Jacques Peretti explores the deals that shaped the way people understand money, from the invention of PayPal to contactless transactions. (R)
12.10 Rugby League: Million Pound Game Highlights. **1.10** Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **2.10** Holby City. (R) **3.05** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Dino Dana. **6.10** Super 4. (R) **6.25** Super 4. (R) **6.35** Make It Pop. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.15** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Ben 10. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Bagel and Becky Show. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: The Haunted Hathaways. (R) **9.05** Scrambled!: Mighty Magiswords! (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Emmerdale 1918. (R) **10.00** This Morning – 30 Unforgettable Years. (R) **11.30** The X Factor. (R) **12.45** ITV News; Weather. **1.00** ITV Racing Live: Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. Coverage of the prestigious meeting from Longchamp. **3.30** Back to Mine. **4.00** The Big Audition. (R) **5.00** You've Been Framed! Gold. (R) **5.30** Queen of the World. (R) **6.30** ITV News; Weather.
6.45 **Regional Programme.** Weather.
7.00 **5 Gold Rings.** Game show, hosted by Phillip Schofield, in which contestants compete to answer visual questions by placing rings on an LED floor.
8.00 **The X Factor.** The live shows draw closer for the remaining 24 acts as they jet off to the Judges' Houses stage, in a bid to land a coveted place in the live shows.
9.00 **Vanity Fair.** Becky is left alone in the world and living in greatly reduced circumstances when Steyne arranges for Rawdon to be shipped overseas. Dobbin discovers that Amelia plans to remarry, a revelation that inspires him to finally confess his feelings for her – but he is not prepared for her reaction. The Sedley family takes a holiday in Germany, where they are unexpectedly reunited with Becky – who gets the chance to redeem a lifetime of selfishness by performing a single good deed on behalf of her dearest friend. Last in the series.
10.05 **The Imitation Game.** Alexander Armstrong hosts the panel show, with Rory Bremner, Debra Stephenson, Alistair McGowan and Ronni Ancona staging their own version of the Olympics.
10.45 ITV News; Weather.
11.05 **Joanna Lumley's Silk Road Adventure.** (R)
12.05 Strangers. (R) **12.55** Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. (R) **3.50** British Superbike Championship Highlights. (R) **4.40** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Formula 1 Japanese Grand Prix Live. **8.30** Formula 1 Japanese Grand Prix Live Reaction. **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Formula 1 Japanese Grand Prix Re-Run. **3.15** The Great British Bake Off. (R) **4.35** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.35** Grand Designs. (R)
6.35 **Channel 4 News.**
7.00 **Phil Spencer's Stately Homes.** The property expert returns to look round more of Britain's stately homes, beginning at Longleat House in Wiltshire, home to the Viscount of Weymouth. Phil learns how Longleat has always been one of Britain's most innovative stately homes, and hears tales of lovesick ghosts and how the building was originally planned as an attempt to wow Queen Elizabeth I. (R)
8.00 **Great Canal Journeys.** New series. Timothy West and Prunella Scales travel down the River Nile from Luxor to Aswan. Tim has some misgivings about attempting such a daring journey, but is won over by Pru's desire for fresh adventure. They discover how travel along the river was vital to the ancient Egyptian civilisation, and discover how the first ever canals were constructed nearby to ferry building materials for the temple at Karnak. Along the way, they visit a Nubian village, purchase aphrodisiacs in a souk, and dance by moonlight.
9.00 **Celebrity Island with Bear Grylls.** Only seven celebrities remain on the island, and they have not eaten in days. They begin to regret the decision to bury the pig they accidentally killed instead of making a meal of it. Martin suffers an infected wound on his leg and fears he will not make it to the end of the series, but becomes determined to help his fellow castaways by leading a raft expedition in search of food.
10.00 **The Circle.** Series assessing the impact of social media, in which individuals from all walks of life compete in a popularity contest.
11.00 **8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown.** Jimmy Carr hosts the comedy panel show, with Sean Lock and Greg Davies taking on Jon Richardson and Holly Walsh. (R)
12.00 Film: A Walk in the Woods. (2015) **1.55** Motor Sport: Mini Challenge. (R) **2.20** Gillette World Sport. **2.45** Mobil 1: The Grid. (R) **3.15** Grand Designs New Zealand. (R) **4.10** Vet on the Hill. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.10** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.15** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **6.30** Luo Bao Bei. (R) **6.40** Digby Dragon. (R) **6.50** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.00** Thomas & Friends. (R) **7.15** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.25** Rusty Rivets. (R) **7.40** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.45** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.10** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.25** Nella the Princess Knight. **8.45** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.00** Pirata & Capitano. (R) **9.15** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **9.30** Floogals. (R) **9.50** Rise of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.05** Rise of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.20** The Wonderful World of Puppies. (R) **11.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.00** Live FIA World Rally Championship. **1.30** Criminals: Caught on Camera. (R) **2.00** Friends. (R) **2.30** Friends. (R) **3.00** Friends. (R) **3.30** Friends. (R) **4.00** Friends. (R) **4.30** Friends. (R) **5.00** Friends. (R) **5.30** Friends. (R)
6.00 **Friends.** Ross lets Rachel in on his most secret sexual fantasy, and Chandler gets involved with an old flame. (R)
6.30 **Friends.** Ross prepares to make an important speech at the museum, and invites the gang along for moral support – but soon regrets his decision. (R)
7.00 **Inside the Chocolate Factory.** The story of a business that started out making cocoa and drinking chocolate almost 200 years ago, eventually evolving into one of the most famous chocolate brands in the world. (R)
7.55 **5 News Weekend.**
8.00 **Rolls-Royce: Dream Machines.** The inside story of the engineering company, looking at how Charles Rolls and Henry Royce created the ultimate in luxury car brands. (R)
9.00 **WW2 Wrecks: Draining the Ocean.** Documentary exploring the undersea wreckage of Second World War vessels, using 3D reconstructions to reveal how they sank.
10.00 **Big Brother.** Daily round-up of highlights.
11.30 Film: **Mr & Mrs Smith.** (2005) Comedy adventure, with Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie.
12.30 Access. **12.35** Film: **Mr & Mrs Smith.** (2005) Concluded. **1.35** SuperCasino. **3.10** Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. (R) **4.45** Wildlife SOS. (R) **5.10** House Doctor. (R) **5.35** Divine Designs. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Engineering Giants: Gas Rig Strip-Down **8.00** James May's Cars of the People **9.00** Cold War, Hot Jets **10.00** Feud: Bette and Joan **11.40** Wonders of the Great Barrier Reef with Iolo Williams **12.35** Treasures of Ancient Greece **1.35** Andre Previn at the BBC **2.35** James May's Cars of the People **3.35** Close
ITV2
12.15 You've Been Framed! Gold **1.15** The X Factor **2.30** Film: Happy Feet (2006) **3.30** FYI Daily **3.35** Film: Happy Feet (2006) **4.40** Film: Despicable Me 2 (2013) **5.40** FYI Daily **5.45** Film: Despicable Me 2 (2013) **6.35** Film: The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001) **7.45** FYI Daily **7.50** Film: The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001) **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.25** Film: Piranha (2010) **1.30** FYI Daily **1.35** Film: Piranha (2010) **2.15** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.25** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
12.55 Agatha Christie's Poirot **2.55** Film: Columbo: Dagger of the Mind (1972) **4.55** Foyle's War **9.00** Lewis **11.00** Wire in the Blood **1.10** A Touch of Frost **3.00** Road to Avonlea **4.55** Murder, She Wrote **5.35** ITV3 Nightscreen
ITV4
12.55 Pawn Stars **2.20** Film: Bend of the River (1952) **3.20** FYI Daily **3.25** Film: Bend of the River (1952) **4.15** Film: Lawman (1971) **5.15** FYI Daily **5.20** Film: Lawman (1971) **6.10** Made in Britain **7.15** Film: Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol (1987) **8.15** FYI Daily **8.20** Film: Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol (1987) **9.00** Film: Passenger 57 (1992) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10** Film: Passenger 57 (1992) **10.50** Film: Death Wish 2 (1981) **11.50** FYI Daily **11.55** Film: Death Wish 2 (1981) **12.40** The Avengers **1.45** Minder **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping
E4
12.55 The Goldbergs **2.55** The Big Bang Theory **6.50** Film: The Three Musketeers (2011) **9.00** Krypton **11.00** The Inbetweeners **12.10** The Big Bang Theory **1.10** Krypton **3.00** Rude Tube **3.25** Hollyoaks
Film4
11.00 The Cockleshell Heroes (1955) **1.05** Flight of the Navigator (1986) **2.50** Epic (2013) **4.55** Carry On Jack (1963) **6.55** Edward Scissorhands (1990) **9.00** Taken 3 (2014) **11.15** True Grit (2010) **1.25** Love, Rosie (2014) **3.35** Close

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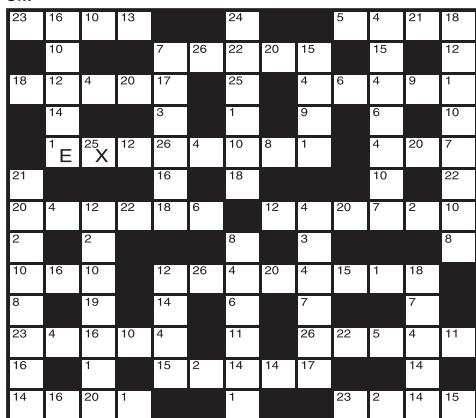
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No.500

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	K	2	T	3	N	4	O	5	H	6	Y	7	M	8	A	9	D	10	J	11	W	12	F	13	S
14	Z	15	Q	16	G	17	U	18	C	19	R	20	I	21	X	22	B	23	E	24	V	25	L	26	P

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues – both fit the same grid.

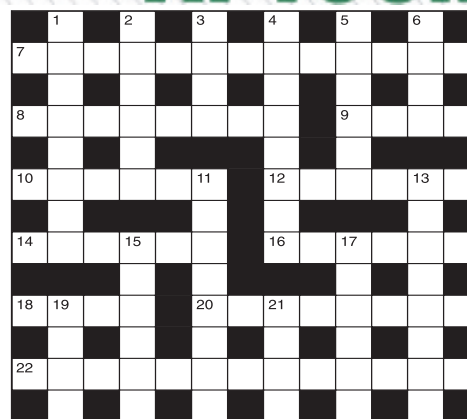
Cryptic Clues:

Across

7. Order climbing down to be in unbroken line (6,7)
8. Disgusted leader is to command unruliness (8)
9. What cats and racing drivers have in common (4)
10. Ancient Greek coin which indicates its value? (6)
12. Take out cover when at home, certainly (6)
14. Accommodation for those inside (6)
16. Narrow-minded because needing fresh air? (6)
18. Cab obtained, thanks to team (4)
20. More than 1000 run because of error in newspaper (8)
22. Bulb production as opposed to heavy engineering? (5,8)

Down

1. Parson is one in large church (8)
2. News item about the left (6)
3. Fastener for breeding establishment (4)
4. Corresponding opening using expensive knights? (4,4)
5. For weighing parts of fish? (6)
6. Break up things in the kitchen (4)
11. Telephone chief for section of electricity supply system (4,4)
13. Petrol producer, for example, again takes showy ornaments (8)
15. Trivial insult (6)
17. Trouble for the United Nations and the others (6)
19. Since including team, things revolve round it (4)
21. One aspect of the team (4)



Quick Clues:

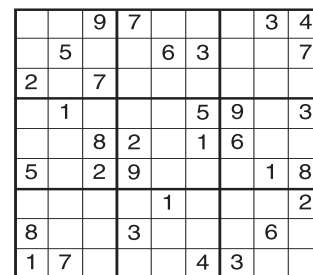
Across

7. Ignominious (13)
8. Lees (8)
9. Kind (4)
10. Amuse (6)
12. Toboggan (6)
14. Improved (6)
16. Eatable (6)
18. Space (4)
20. Power (8)
22. Compliant (13)

Down

1. Vital cord (8)
2. Writer (6)
3. Small valley (4)
4. Aversion (8)
5. Cloak (6)
6. Smack (4)
11. Irritating (8)
13. Jelly-like substance (8)
15. Hoyden (6)
17. Kindle (6)
19. Formerly (4)
21. Impolite (4)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

4	9	1	7	8	2	6	5	3
2	5	7	3	4	6	9	8	1
8	3	6	9	1	5	4	2	7
3	2	8	4	7	9	5	1	6
7	4	9	5	6	1	8	3	2
6	1	5	2	3	8	7	9	4
9	6	2	1	5	7	3	4	8
5	8	4	6	2	3	1	7	9
1	7	3	8	9	4	2	6	5

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Curb; 8 Electorate; 9 Testable; 10 Soda; 12 Stupor; 14 Siding; 15 Skater; 17 Rushes; 18 Wren; 19 Tomahawk; 21 Call to arms; 22 Take. Down: 2 Undertaker; 3 Beat; 4 Member; 5 Athens; 6 Presides; 7 Beta; 11 Donkey-work; 13 Patently; 16 Ration; 17 Remark; 18 Wick; 20 Host.
QUICK - Across: 1 Tiff; 8 Exuberance; 9 Maternal; 10 Hook; 12 Punish; 14 Relent; 15 Bandit; 17 Perish; 18 Reel; 19 Ecstatic; 21 Pugnacious; 22 Oath. Down: 2 Immaculate; 3 Fete; 4 Quench; 5 Pedlar; 6 Bachelor; 7 Seek; 11 Omniscient; 13 Indolent; 16 Trench; 17 Pastor; 18 Rope; 20 Also.

Quiz

1. Who wrote the libretto for Stravinsky's opera The Rake's Progress?
2. What type of creature is an argonaut?
3. What may be real, complex or rational?
4. For what is the panther another name?
5. On which river is Indianapolis?
6. In which country is Sucre?
7. What is the name of the sun's faint halo, visible at solar eclipses?
8. In which Irish county are Macgillycuddy's Reeks?
9. What is fescue?
10. Which best-selling thriller writer died in February 1995?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Robert Bolt; 2 An eel; 3 Orestes;
4 Liverpool; 5 Peter Pan; 6 Ocean water;
7 Shark; 8 Mariner 2; 9 Klapka; 10 New York.

Niner: INTERPLAY

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

453467
4517
9287

gives a colour,
gives a second colour,
gives colour.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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Ford Data Services solutions for European fleet customers

By Sharon Walters

Ford is to bring two new connected vehicle solutions to European fleet customers early next year.

Through its Ford Commercial Solutions (FCS) unit, Ford is developing a range of connected vehicle solutions to enable fleet customers to manage their vehicles more easily and conveniently, helping them to run their business more efficiently.

Ford Telematics will provide fleet operators with the ability to view data from connected Ford vehicles in their fleet through the Ford Telematics application. Using information collected from the vehicle, an intuitive web-based portal provides useful insights to help improve fleet efficiency and driver safety, enabling fleet owners, managers and employees to view fleets in near real-time and gain rapid insights into fleet performance.

Ford recognises that some larger fleets may wish to work with their own in-house or third-party system providers to develop bespoke vehicle solutions to meet their needs. That is why Ford has designed Ford Data Services, which gives large company fleets, telematics service providers and fleet management companies direct access to valuable OEM-grade vehicle data.

Taking advantage of Ford vehicles' build-in modem,



No additional third party hardware is needed

Ford Data Services transfers vehicle data directly from the vehicle to the cloud without the need for additional third-party hardware, management or installation downtime. From there, the vehicle data is relayed to the fleet's internal IT system or third-party provider.

"Today's fleets are under huge pressure to deliver safe, efficient and legal operations," said Dave Phatak, director of Ford Commercial Solutions, Europe. "That is why we are developing a range of connectivity-based solutions for our fleet customers to allow them to focus on what matters most: running their business."

Ford Telematics and Ford Data Services are the first new products from the FCS business in Europe, a unit within Ford Smart Mobility. They build upon Ford's new connected vehicle ecosystem – Ford vehicle connectivity technology, Ford Transportation Mobility Cloud and Ford mobility solutions – enabling them to benefit from Ford's continuous vehicle improvement, data know-how and expertise, and access to the latest data signals.

Insights from fleet owners, managers and employees across industries have helped to inform the new solutions. By placing its customers at the centre of the development process, Ford is helping fleet owners spend less time managing their vehicles and more time managing their business.

And, because Ford designs the vehicles – their technology, data systems and electrical architecture – it is able to provide the newest updates and vehicle signals as soon as they become available, delivering insights as quickly as customers need them.

Ford has already announced that, by 2020, it will provide connectivity across its entire vehicle range in Europe. Ford will launch Ford Telematics and Ford Data Services in Europe in the spring of 2019, arriving in the U.K. and Germany first with further markets to follow. Both services will be compatible with the latest range of Ford passenger cars and commercial vehicles, as well as older vehicles without a modem via a new Ford-engineered plug-in device (PID).

Ford Commercial Solutions has already established agreements with a number of telematics service providers in North America, including Verizon Connect, and is now in advanced stages of discussion to establish similar agreements in Europe.



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Taste of the high life in modern SUV

By John Griffiths

There's no doubt that environmental concerns – to say nothing of regulations – and the demonisation of diesel has accelerated the pace of innovation in the motor industry.

That's not to mention the need to protect owners' pockets from rising fuel costs and taxes, as that's still a major factor in our motoring choices.

Swedish brand Volvo is tackling the problem boldly, by declaring that within a couple of years all its cars will be going electric – either as hybrids or full battery-powered vehicles.

The prospects are good for the Swedes, whose recent models are at least a match for what many call the 'premium' European brands. Their smallest SUV, the XC40, was launched earlier this year into probably the most crowded and competitive area of the market but nevertheless took the European Car of the Year title. It's not hard to see why.

Originally powered by 2.0 litre petrol and diesel motors, there's now another option – a 1.5 litre petrol version, using the first three cylinder engine in the brand's long history.

It augurs well for the future, as this engine will appear in future Volvo models mated with an electric motor as the mainstay of its new hybrid range.

The figures are impressive enough – 0 to 62mph in under ten seconds and average economy of nearly 45mpg (official figures) for a car of this size. For while it's the smallest of Volvo's three SUVs, the XC40 is few people's idea of small and weighs in at nearly one and a half tonnes.

But, as the old song says, it's not what you



Controls and instruments are familiar

do it's the way that you do it. With 154bhp and a hefty 265Nm of torque (thanks to turbocharging) the new engine is smooth and whisper quiet, giving limousine-like levels of refinement even at motorway speeds.

Perhaps surprisingly (since it does power the cheapest models in the XC40 range) Volvo is forecasting the three cylinder petrol engine (T3 in Volvo speak) will only account for ten per cent of sales.

It believes a majority of drivers will still opt for the similarly-powered but more economical diesels.

The T3 comes only as a front wheel drive model (4WD is reserved for more powerful versions) and prices start from £27,905, and it has a slight advantage in terms of benefit in kind tax against the rest of the range.

The test car was a sportily-themed R-Design Pro version, listed at £31,360, but this actually weighed in at more than £38,000 as it was loaded with optional extras. Like most press fleet cars, Volvo likes to showcase most, if not



While smaller than the XC90 and XC60, the new XC40 isn't exactly small, with 432 litres of boot space (1,308 with the rear seats folded)

all, of what's on offer for those with deeper pockets. One of these was the four corner adaptive dampers, which at £750 seems worthwhile as it enables the car to constantly find the balance between a supple ride and sporty dynamics.

While the official (laboratory test) fuel average is almost 45mpg (with a CO2 rating of 146g/km) I averaged a not unreasonable 38mpg, which fell to around 33mpg on a series of shorter journeys.

While smaller than the latest XC90 and XC60, the new XC40 isn't exactly small. With 432 litres of boot space (1,308 with the rear seats folded) it's generously-sized cabin has head and leg room for five adults in comfort.

Its controls and instruments are familiar to anyone who has driven a modern Volvo, with the central touchscreen controller domination and dash for intuitive access to the navigation, audio, communications and vehicle settings – many functions being mirrored on the configurable 12.3 inch 'TFT' instrument display in front of the driver.

Safety features high on Volvo's agenda, naturally, so XC40 drivers get the 'city safety' package which includes forward collision warning and, if necessary, emergency braking. The system detects not only cars but also pedestrians, cyclists and large animals.

There are also head-on crash and run-off road mitigation system as well as multiple

airbags and the Volvo's inherent strength. As European Car of the Year the new XC40 was the logical choice to launch Volvo's new engine as the company signals its efforts to reduce its impact on the environment and drivers' pockets.

The new T3 power plant will have an important part to play in Volvo's vision of the future, and it does inspire confidence. While not the most powerful or economical choice, it is a masterful piece of engineering for its blend of smooth, quiet performance for those who prefer petrol.

It proves the point that you don't need a big, thirsty engine to enjoy a taste of the high life in a modern SUV.



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Porsche axes diesel power from its line-up of vehicles



Existing diesel customers will continue to be looked after

Porsche has confirmed that diesel power will no longer feature in its line-up of vehicles.

The German firm, which last brought out a diesel machine in February, cited a decline in demand for black-pump cars and its focus on developing electric technologies as reasons for dropping the fuel.

It previously offered diesel powertrains in its Macan and Cayenne SUVs, as well as for the Panamera, but says the fuel only made up 12 per cent of Porsche sales in 2017.

Oliver Blume, Porsche chief executive, said: "Porsche is not demonising diesel. It is, and will remain, an important propulsion technology.

"We as a sports car manufacturer, however, for whom diesel has always played a secondary role, have come to the conclusion that we would like our future to be diesel-free. Naturally, we will continue to look after our existing diesel customers with the professionalism they expect."

The firm says it will have invested more than six billion euros (circa £5.4bn) in electric vehicles by 2022, and claims that 63 per cent of Panameras sold in Europe are already hybrid.

Its first all-electric car, the Taycan, is set to debut in 2019. Exact specs for it have yet to be revealed, but Porsche claims it will boast a range in excess of 310 miles while delivering more than 591bhp.

Blume added: "Our aim is to occupy the technological vanguard – we are intensifying our focus on the core of our brand while consistently aligning our company with the mobility of the future."

Parent company Volkswagen was found to have cheated diesel engine emissions tests in 2015, sparking a global scandal.



Triumphant European team after reclaiming the Ryder Cup in Paris at the weekend beating the US 17.5-10.5



This is what it is all about – the Ryder Cup trophy



Peter Baker at the South Staffordshire Golf Club and, right, in 1993



Peter Baker on the 17th tee at the Forest of Arden

Ryder Cup memories burn bright for Baker

SPORTING FEATURE

By Matt Wilson

AS the victorious European team reclaimed the Ryder Cup in Paris at the weekend it brought back memories for someone closer to home.

The team wrapped up a 17.5-10.5 victory over the United States. And whenever the Ryder Cup rolls around, Peter Baker is reminded of 1993. "That was the highlight of my career," he smiles, 25 years later.

"I beat Corey Pavin in the singles, and beat Fred Couples and Paul Azinger in the four-ball with Woosy (Ian Woosnam).

"That was a big year. I won a couple of tournaments and played well in the Ryder Cup."

Baker was just 25 at the time and ranked 67 in the world. He was the second youngest golfer in the competition and the lowest-ranked player in the European team.

But even though Europe lost that year, Baker finished as one of their stars with three wins and one defeat. And to say he and Woosnam beat Couples and Azinger, who were ranked five and six in the world at the time, is somewhat of an understatement.

They demolished them to leave Europe one point ahead going into the singles.

Relaxed

But Baker, who grew up in Codsall and now lives '1,000 yards' from his old house in Tettenhall, is refusing to live on past glories. Having recently turned 50, the South Staffordshire Golf Club professional is enjoying a second career on the European Senior Tour.

"I'm enjoying the competition side of it," he said. "It's funny because I haven't done it for a while so I'm getting used to it again. It's nice to get another chance, in a way. It's a little bit more relaxed, but funnily enough I was leading the other week going into the last round and it felt weird."

"I felt a bit under pressure, a bit edgy. I thought 'bloody hell, I haven't done this for a while'. It's about getting used to that pressure. Hopefully I'll calm down a bit."

Senior Tours are serious business these days. Baker has watched one of his friends, Paul Broad-

"I'm enjoying the competition side of it. I haven't done it for a while so I'm getting used to it again"

hurst, from Walsall, win the 2016 Senior Open and this year's Senior PGA Championship. Broadhurst took home \$585,000 for winning that second major and has made a staggering \$1.1million so far this year across the pond on the PGA Champions Tour.

Baker's winnings from the European Senior Tour are slightly more modest, but turning 50 can give golfers a second crack of the whip.

However, the 2006 Ryder Cup vice-captain is picking and choosing his battles these days.

"When I played on the main tour I did nearly 600 tournaments so I missed a lot of my kids growing up," he admitted. "I'd better make it up to them now. They are 25 and 26 so they're well on the way though."

"It's not just a case of dusting off the clubs and raking in the cash, because it takes more work getting back into shape once you're the other side of 50."

"This last year I've done a bit more gym work, more stretching work, trying to make myself more durable," he said. "I don't think there's a better exercise than swinging the club though."

"You can't quite go at it like you used to because you're in bits the next day. If you keep swinging it helps, rather than have a week off, because then you're stiff. It's hard work on the joints, you do get a bit sore."

"You get to know yourself a bit better. You're always looking to recover a bit better, ice baths, etc. And then if you've played well a nice cold beer, that's how we used to do it, nothing wrong with that. It's a bit of a rehydration!"

But life on Tour is not necessarily as glamorous as it appears.



"It's not so much the long days," he says. "It's the travelling and the hotels, they're all the same. It's different to going on holiday, any businessman will tell you that. The enjoyable bit is playing the golf obviously, getting out on the course and playing, you meet a lot of nice people, that's a plus."

"The travelling is the hard bit, week after week, hotels are hotels."

Baker is not really a man to complain too much. He has a ready smile and a warm chuckle, and when the conversation turns to his beloved Wolves side, he starts to really enjoy himself.

"I've been a season ticket holder since I was four," he boasts. "I used to go with my dad. Since then I've missed about four seasons, that's about it."

Improved

"Last season was brilliant. I didn't miss many games, but it's totally different to what we've ever had. It's exciting football, it's entertaining, they're organised, look like they know what they're doing."

"We tried to play a little bit like that with (Stale) Solbakken, and (Mark) McGhee, but you can't turn the players they had into playing that way."

"The players we've got now can play that way. The lads that Nuno has kept, like (Matt) Doherty, he can play that way and he's helped them, improved them."

So what does Baker, a season ticket holder at Molineux for more than 40 years, think of Wolves's controversial link with super-agent Jorge Mendes?

"My opinion on that is you've got to be with the best to be the best," he shrugs. "It's a bit like having the best golf coach, you want to learn from the best."

Miller time, unbeaten record put to the test

DUDLEY'S Josh Miller has no qualms in putting his fledgling unbeaten record on the line when he steps in with Ricky Hatton trained prospect Jake Haigh this month.

The 25-year-old super middleweight has racked up three consecutive wins since turning pro but puts his unbeaten streak on the line against Macclesfield's Haigh in Stoke on October 20. Miller and Haigh clash at the top of BCB promotions' 'Pride of the Potteries' show at King's Hall.

Miller said: "I'm excited. We are both undefeated and these are the fights that I want to be in to test my skills. I think it makes for a great fight."

Miller had 18 amateur fights and won a West Midlands title and a Central England Title before moving into the paid ranks. After making his ring return in July, he is eager to make up for lost time.

As well as Haigh versus Miller, Stoke boxers Nathan Heaney and debutant Cole Johnson are also in action alongside Wolverhampton's Conah Walker and Swadlincote's Midlands Area champion, Connor Parker.

Students get chance to learn art of boxing

WOLVERHAMPTON University students are being given the chance to train with professional boxers.

For just £3 a week, students enrolled at either the city or Walsall campus can train alongside professional fighters with Black Country Boxing (BCB) Promotions, including British champion Jason Welborn, of Rowley Regis and Wolverhampton duo Kyle Williams, an English champion, and 'Black Widow' Lauren Johnson, a former amateur champion turned professional.

Fully qualified coaches will deliver the sessions at the BCB HQ in Wharfedale Street, Wednesbury. Johnson, a sports assistant & fitness instructor at the university, said: "This is a wonderful opportunity for students to get fit and learn the art of boxing."

"We are looking forward to working with the students," said BCB's head trainer Paul Mann. Sessions take place from Monday to Friday, from 10am-noon and on Sunday mornings, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Email paul@bcb-promotions.com for more information.

Follow in Joshua's steps? Just Delicious

AN amateur boxer from Wolverhampton is hoping to follow in the footsteps of heavyweight champion Anthony Joshua.

Delicious Orie, a 21-year-old half-Russian, half-Nigerian, is a member of Jewellery Quarter Boxing Club, within Henrietta Street Gym, and juggles his fighting with studying economics and management at Aston University.

He has already trodden in Joshua's path, winning the 2018 Super-Heavyweight Elite Haringey Box Cup, Europe's biggest amateur tournament, which Joshua won in 2009 and 10. He has added the East Midlands Box Cup, and, with 18 wins from 20 bouts, Delicious has become British University champion in 2017 and 18 and England Boxing Development champion.

He said: "Joshua is a huge inspiration and role model for me. He's definitely paving the way for super heavyweights like me."

Jewellery Quarter Boxing Club head coach Mick Maguire said: 'Delicious' work ethic and talent continues to impress and his accomplishments speak for themselves."



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Glassboys' three goals in first half

Stourbridge 3 Needham Market 1
STOURBRIDGE moved up to third place in the league table after sealing victory with three goals before half-time. Manager Gary Hackett was quietly pleased, saying: "We created lots of first-half chances but also missed plenty. Callum (Powell) and Kaiman (Anderson) combined well and, although we took our foot off the pedal in the second half, we're on a nice unbeaten league run to keep us in the mix ahead of next week's big cup game".

The Glassboys missed a great chance to take the lead after just 40 seconds when Powell's first time pass into the penalty area found Anderson totally unmarked, but he blazed the ball high over. Robbie Thompson-Brown's 25 yard shot was then collected low by goalkeeper Jake Jessup after 15 minutes and Powell went close again after 25 minutes.

Anderson redeemed himself for his earlier miss by turning provider after 28 minutes and squared the ball for Powell to side-foot home from close range. Anderson then flicked Powell's 31st minute cross just over before forcing a good save from Jessup with a snapshot seconds later. Anderson was on the score-sheet himself when he thumped a loose ball past Jessup from ten yards to double the lead in the 34th minute. Powell grabbed his second goal in first half injury time. The visitors got a scrappy 75th minute consolation goal via Tariq Issa.

Glassboys host Kidderminster Harriers in the FA Cup third qualifying round on Saturday.

Setbacks still can't put the brakes on Ashfield title bid

KINVER'S Chris Ashfield overcame an early crash and a lack of brakes to claim the East Midlands Racing Association title.

After a year of dominating the Minutemen class, the 24-year-old nearly lost it after the final hurdle but recovered to claim the crown.

Ashfield had gone into final round with a 98-point cushion and looked almost certain to win the championship. However, headmitted the campaign almost fell apart when he ran through an oil patch, rendering his front brakes useless.

"My dad somehow managed to re-crimp the brake lines with a set of pipe grips," he said. "The brakes worked but they weren't 100 per cent. Thankfully, the first race was half wet and half dry on track. I made the decision to run a wet front tyre and a dry rear."

"The extra grip countered my lack of brakes and it allowed me to win the first race and take the overall championship."

After finding some new brake lines Ashfield went out and won the last race too.

Jack strikes out for golf success



Golfer and student Jack Severn

GOLFER Jack Severn is on a high after two great results.

The 17-year-old Stourbridge College student won the Worcestershire County Golf under 18s tournament in the summer and followed up by being runner-up in the Midland Golf Union Junior Champion of Champions.

Jack went on to compete in the England Golf Boys' County Championship of Champions tournament and

will now head to the Junior European Open qualifiers in Andalusia, Spain, in November.

"I feel this is my time to achieve the best possible results I can as a junior golfer then break into the adult tour," said the Brierley Hill student.

Stourbridge College's golf academy programme is delivered in partnership with the Midland College of Golf. Jack who trains at Cleobury

Mortimer Club, is studying a Level 3 sports diploma and believes this has helped to improve his performance.

Jack hopes to build on his 2017 season where he achieved fourth place in the Junior European Open in Spain and qualified for the British Schools and Colleges (BSC) Golf National Finals at Trevose, Cornwall.

"I want to retain my county title and improve on my tournament performances," he said.

Boys DASH ahead to qualify

YOUNGSTERS from Dudley and Stourbridge Harriers (DASH) headed to Himley Hall for the Dudley Schools Cross Country Championships.

Luke Bailey put on a fantastic sprint at the end in a bid for the top spot, he narrowly missed out and claimed a well deserved second place finish.

Cian Wood and Rhys Lees both out in strong performances and finished in 9th and 10th place. All three boys qualified to represent Dudley in the West Midlands trials.

The following day saw a battle of the Bodins take place at Windsor half marathon. Father and son Darrell and Adam Bodin raced around the 13.1 mile course, the youngest of the two took the victory in his first half marathon.

With a field of more than 3,000 runners; Adam finished in 43rd place in a time of 01:24:25, with Darrell finishing in 75th place in a time of 01:27:00.

The previous weekend, James Wright ran a 34-mile ultra run from Bridge to Bridge Via Port, with an average pace under eight minutes per mile he finished in four hours and 29 minutes, putting him in overall third place but he took the top spot with first senior male.

A group headed to Sutton Park for the 6 Stage Midland Counties Road Relays. As a result of the excellent performances put in by the runners DASH qualified for the national men's six stage road relays at Sutton Park on Saturday. Amongst a strong field DASH 'A' team finished in 29th place in a total time of 02:02:35.

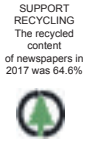
Byfield features on town hall boxing bill

DUDLEY'S Les Byfield lines up for a 'spooktacular' night of boxing at Walsall Town Hall on October 27.

English bantamweight champion Kyle Williams returns for an international eight-round contest on the BCB Promotions bill, while Ryan 'Stewart' Davies, of Oldbury and Burntwood's Troi Coleman are both straight back in action. Danny Ball and Connor Lee Jones feature alongside Central Area heavyweight champion Kash Ali.

Tickets are £35 standard or £65 to include a buffet. Call 0845 111 2900. Fancy dress is welcomed with a Halloween theme.

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YELTZ KNOCK OUT WOLVES XI

HALESOWEN Town overcame a Wolves XI to advance in the Birmingham Senior Cup on Monday night.

The Yeltz - who had Shrewsbury loanee Cameron Gregory making his debut in goal after signing earlier in the day - won 3-0 thanks to goals from Roland Agbor, James Roberts and another Shrewsbury loanee in Christos Shelis. A crowd of 274 saw the Yeltz progress.

Gregory, aged 18, and formerly of Wolves, joined on a one-month loan deal. He had been sent on loan to Chippenham Town from Shrews last month but was immediately recalled due to an injury to back-up goalkeeper Steve Arnold.

Gregory was snapped up by Halesowen following an injury to first choice Dan Platt on Saturday, meaning Yeltz had to play 50 minutes against Bedworth United with striker Lee Hughes in goal.

But John Hill's battlers came back with their first away win of the season in Southern Central courtesy of a late Asa Charlton header.

Capitalise

Hughes went close with the first chance of the game on 12 minutes, but the ball went over the bar.

Kai Tonge put a ball across the box for Bedworth a minute later, but they failed to capitalise.

Kieran Morris headed a free-kick over the bar for Halesowen on 31 minutes before Platt was injured after a collision and Walsall loanee Tobias Hayles-Docherty came on, with former Albion man Hughes going in goal.

The second half followed a similar pattern to the first, with few chances, although Yeltz did see a corner cleared off the line.

But the Yeltz got the decisive goal on 88 minutes when Charlton headed in although Hughes was called into action in injury time to make a great save and keep the hosts out.

Yeltz are at home to Rushall Olympic in the Southern Central division on Saturday.

Ambitious Hawks aiming high



Girl power - ambitious Halas Hawks have expanded the number of female teams

ONE of the Black Country's largest junior football clubs is holding talks to establish a permanent base for the first time in its history.

Ambitious Halas Hawks have designs on securing a sports field on the Halesowen-Stourbridge border and have opened discussions with the local community.

Hawks boast 37 sides which includes junior, veterans, women's open age outfit and four new girls' teams - the latter of which have been developed following Football Association funding.

The club have between 400 and 450 players on their books with the junior sides operating from under-7s to under-16s. Hawks are also building up a partnership with Halesowen Town to act as their youth academy.

However, Hawks' main goal is not to develop 'the next Premier League star', as secretary Bob Hickman puts it, but rather to keep hundreds of children off the streets and get them active. They have had players go on to reach higher levels, including former Wolves and cur-

rent Birmingham City midfielder David Davis, who played for Hawks up to under-14s.

The club was founded in 1980 and has grown from one team. But it is yet to find a permanent base. However, that could change with the club now in talks regarding a new home.

Hickman said: "We unfortunately don't have a permanent playing base. We have been looking for a suitable site for a number of years now. We are looking at a site on the Halesowen and Stourbridge border."

The club was recently awarded £6,000 from the FA to develop the four new girls teams, alongside paying for coaching courses and buying new equipment. The money came from an FA project aimed at increasing participation in grassroots football, particularly for girls. Hawks boast around 40 to 50 coaching staff. Every team manager has either a Level 1 or 2 coaching badge accredited by the FA.

The club is always on the lookout for new players. Visit www.halashawks.co.uk

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